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Allie seeing God in the Well.

See page 84.

A WAIF

FROM THE RIVER SIDE;

OR,

Stories, Sketches, Letters, and Poems,

SELECTED FROM A MANUSCRIPT NEWSPAPER.

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THREE ILLUSTRATIONS.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

How the Waif came to be..... 7

Selections from the Waif:

I. The Mysterious Treasure 32

II. The Presiding Elder's Story..... 69

III. Allie at the Well..... 82

IV. The Picnic..... 87

V. A Letter to Charlie..... 138

VI. Cousin Charlie's Letter to Ernest.... 142

VII. Little Fanny's Story..... 144

VIII. Who would be a Queen?..... 157

IX. From dear Grandmamma..... 161

X. Lines written by our little Cousin Sylvia..... 163

XI. Aunt Allen's Story..... 165

Illustrations.

Allie seeing God in the Well..... 2

Rosalie and Bertha looking at Pierre's Poultry, Rabbits, etc..... 59

The Young Lady who would be a Queen ... 156

A WAIF
FROM THE RIVER SIDE.

HOW THE "WAIF" CAME TO BE.

In a remote parsonage lived an aged lady with her daughter and two orphan grandchildren. I have called their dwelling a parsonage, though he whose clerical character gave it that name had gone to his reward long before the period at which the story begins, leaving behind him the incense which a life so holy, and services so devoted shed over the place which has witnessed them.

It was a cheerful and comfortable home which he bequeathed to his family. It was situated on a broad sheet of water. It

nestled amid hills and woods, which gave the house a warm and sheltered appearance. And much did its inmates need all that protection without and warm fires within could yield, for our story begins at the commencement of an unusually severe winter. The ground had been covered with snow for several weeks, though it was only the middle of December, and now the snow-flakes were falling thickly and fast.

Near the fire in the snug parlor sat the aged lady. You needed but to look at the fine form and at the kindling eyes which, ever and anon, were raised from the book she was reading, to perceive that she was a woman of no ordinary character. Her every feature confirmed the impression that her eyes and form had made, and expressed most truthfully the kindly emotions, holy thoughts, and heavenward aspirations that dwelt within.

Beside her sat a younger lady, engaged

in work, which did not, however, withdraw her attention from the book her mother was reading aloud. The two children who completed this family group, had stationed themselves at the window, and were watching the snow-flakes as they fell.

"O Fanny," said little Ernest, "did you ever see such a snow-storm? Aleck says that the roads are almost closed. How the wind blows! Poor Aunt Ellen, how will she get here?"

This exclamation was heard by the younger lady, who, laying her hand on her mother's arm, said:

"Mamma, we have quite forgotten that Aunt Allen was to be here this afternoon. She must have set out this morning before it began to snow; had we not better send Aleck to break the road?"

"Do, my dear," said Mrs. Ellers; "and as one horse can do but little, let him ride over to Hopkins's and secure his assistance. We need only state the case, and

I am sure the good farmer will send his team in the direction where they are most wanted.

Miss Ellers went out to give the necessary orders, while Mrs. Ellers's upturned eye showed that she was committing her friend and sister to safer and surer protection than man could afford.

The children, of course, followed their aunt to hear and see all they could, Ernest not a little proud that he had given the first alarm. Aleck was not in the kitchen; he had gone to the barn, where stood the cattle patiently awaiting the care of the herdsman. As she looked through the fast freezing window-pane toward the cattle-shed, Miss Ellers was reminded of those beautifully graphic lines of Cowper:

> "The cattle mourn in corners, where the fence
> Screens them, and seem half petrified to sleep
> In unrecumbent sadness. There they wait
> Their wonted fodder; not like hungering man,
> Fretful if unsupplied; but silent, meek,
> And patient of the slow-paced swain's delay."

There was, however, no time for sentiment, and she hastened to open the door; but the driving storm soon forced her to shut it again. The wind had risen, and was whirling the snow in fantastic shapes. She almost felt that the errand on which she was about to send was a hopeless one; yet at all events it must be tried.

"Mary and Eliza have such bad colds that they must not go out in this storm, so, Ernest dear, you must try to get to the barn and tell Aleck to come here immediately," said Miss Ellers as she wrapped the stout little fellow up, and drew over his feet and ancles a coarse pair of woolen stockings.

Ernest was soon tumbling in the snowdrifts; but he breasted the storm manfully, and at length succeeded in getting to the barn. Aleck soon appeared with the boy on his broad shoulders, and hastened to the kitchen, where Miss Ellers still stood. After hearing her request he replied:

"Why, ma'am, I couldn't get to Mr.

Hopkins's till night, but I'll do all I can; and now I think of it, I'll turn all the cattle into the road."

To say was with Aleck to do; and the children clapped their hands as they saw Aleck on horseback driving the whole live stock before him. Ernest watched the poor plodding animals as far as he could see them, well knowing that their labor would be well repaid on their return. In half an hour Aleck retraced his steps, apparently in high glee as he waved his hat and smiled and nodded to the children, then drove his herd back again, but soon re-appeared, and stopped at the door to say that Farmer Hopkins was out doing what he could to keep the roads open.

"I can't imagine," said Mrs. Ellers, "the reason of Aleck's high spirits, unless he is so delighted with wrestling with the wind and the snow. With such a wind I am very sure no track can be kept open."

Mrs. Ellers rose and walked to the window, a shade of anxiety resting on her usually placid countenance. Just then the tinkle of a sleigh-bell was heard, and Farmer Hopkins dashed up to the door. Mary ran in to add fresh fuel to the fire, while Miss Ellers, followed by the children, rushed to the door to receive a well-muffled figure, whom they were quite sure must be Aunt Allen, and Aunt Allen it really was. Mrs. Ellers's face was illuminated as she again embraced this dear sister, while "Dear Aunt Allen! welcome back! welcome back!" resounded on all sides. The children kissed each other, and danced for joy; while Mary and Eliza looked on with pleased faces until their turn to welcome the good and cherished lady should come.

"Sit down, dear sister," said Mrs. Ellers, "you must have had a very fatiguing ride!"

"Not at all," said Aunt Allen; "I arrived at Mr. Hopkins's about noon, and

there was even then a large snowdrift across the road into which the driver plunged with so little discretion that the sleigh upset. Mr. Hopkins saw our overthrow and ran out to assist me; we went over so gradually and into such a soft bank of snow that I was not at all hurt. However, as I learned that the cross-road was much drifted, I sent back the sleigh, intrusting myself to the kind farmer's care, who promised to break the road for me and convey me to the end of my journey; and I assure you after my long drive the hospitalities of his house were very refreshing. The nice little parlor into which he ushered me was the picture of neatness and comfort. Mrs. Hopkins put on the kettle and gave me an excellent cup of tea. I assure you I had a fine repast. Meanwhile her good husband was collecting as many teams on the road as he could. On meeting Aleck he left the part of the road nearest to you to him, and returned speedily for me. The wind was

fast filling his tracks, and I was brought on as rapidly as the roads would allow, and so carefully that I did not even suffer from fear."

"Well, dear Aunt Allen, you are here now," said the little ones, as they ran off with some of Aunt Allen's wrappings, while their aunt was helping her off with the rest.

Aunt Allen was at last fairly seated in her own chair beside the blazing fire, and with a gesture peculiarly her own she exclaimed: "O I am so glad to be with you again!"

"But why, my dear sister," said Mrs. Ellers, "have you so long delayed your return to us?"

"Meta was called suddenly to the city, and begged me so earnestly to remain with the girls that I could not resist; she only returned yesterday morning."

"Aunt," said Miss Ellers, "you must need rest; won't you seek it in your room? It is all ready for you, and you will enjoy

the evening better for a little sleep. I will call you in time for tea."

"Thank you, dear, I will do so. It will brighten me for this evening."

The children in the meanwhile had been very busy, so that when Aunt Allen reached her room she found all her parcels and packages, carpet-bags and bandboxes as neatly arranged as such articles could be.

When Aunt Allen came down the supper was ready, and after first asking the blessing of God, they partook of the bountiful meal which his goodness had bestowed; all were in high spirits. Every one had something to tell, something to ask. "How bright you all look," said Mrs. Allen.

"Why, Aunt Allen, when did you ever come here that it was not bright? Why, aunty, you brighten us," said little Ernest.

Mrs. Ellers turned on her sister a look of fond affection which quite confirmed the little boy's remark, and Mrs. Allen, having wiped her eyes, began in a tremu-

lous voice, which strengthened as she went on, to tell the children of their cousins at ———.

"Meta has returned," said she, "laden with stores of various kinds; the children are busily preparing their Christmas gifts; mysterious packages come into the house and are put nobody knows where."

Fanny and Ernest exchanged glances, and looked very wise and very happy, for they too had their innocent little secrets.

"And I suppose," said Mrs. Ellers, "dear Meta is the queen-bee, directing every one to right and good purpose."

"Yes," said Miss Ellers, "and the working-bee as well. Who ever saw Meta idle?"

"O," said Aunt Allen, "had you seen the work she cut out and arranged before I left!"

"The old and poor need not fear the cold now. Miss Meta has been to York," said Miss Ellers, laughing; "dear Meta!"

"But, children, I must tell you of one

device by which your cousins hope to make the winter pass more pleasantly. They have commenced a family newspaper, which promises both profit and amusement. All write, even little Ned, who sits on sister's lap and tells his little story, which she jots down for him. Once a week they meet at an early hour in the library; Meta reads the paper to which all have contributed. The authorship of the several articles is to remain unknown, but often the young writers betray themselves by an over modest look; and little Ned on the reading of his contribution invariably claps his hands and calls out, 'My tory! my tory!' After the reading is finished Meta opens the parlor door, where a table prettily decorated invites them to a feast of fruits and nuts."

"Delightful!" said the two children, "how we would like to be there!"

"Ask Aunt Gertrude to begin such a periodical here," said Aunt Allen.

"O aunt, will you?"

Their grandmamma here interposed her gentle remonstrance, saying, "My children, your aunt has already too much to occupy her."

"O no, mamma," Miss Ellers replied, "I am not so much burdened with work as to shrink from so pleasant a project as this. I think it might not only be useful at the present time, but it would fix many a fleeting pleasure and transmit many an interesting incident to the future. I think, mamma, we will have the paper; but remember, all must write."

How the wind raved and the snow was piled around the house that night. The weather was intensely cold, but the fire burned brightly on the hearth, and the family as they surrounded it cared little for the storm without. The neighborhood in which they lived was so happy as to contain none of that abject poverty which is the effect of vice, indolence, or improvidence. The ocean and its mariners were sometimes spoken of; but uncertain and

distant sorrow had little power to alloy the certain and present joy, and so the first evening of Aunt Allen's return passed. The children were permitted to sit up an hour later in honor of that event, and then Mrs. Ellers herself proposed going. How gratefully did the song of praise arise from the assembled family, Aleck's deep base uniting with the rest; and when the chapter was read Mrs. Ellers's voice rose in prayer as she commended all that was dear to her to the care of her heavenly Father; and then she retired for the night.

Not so Aunt Gertrude. After seeing her dear children to their rooms, covering them up warmly for the night, and giving to each young heart a few precious words to repose upon, she left them. The parlor fire still glowed brightly; and drawing her work-table and chair near it, she took out thread, needle, and scissors, and from a recess near the fireplace some card-board vignettes, gold paper,

and mucilage were produced, and soon from these elements a beautiful little box was evolved on which glowed in letters of gold the word 'TIS-BUT. Having accomplished the work she retired to her room.

Great was the surprise of the children the next morning at the scene presented, for wherever there was a crack or cranny there lay a wreath of snow; while under each door and window of the hall lay a small drift in memory of the larger ones without.

"Only look, Aunt Gertrude," they cried as they saw her entering the hall. Taking the hand of each she led them into the parlor. There were no snow-drifts here, but the windows were covered with the delicate traces of frost, in which they might fancy almost what they liked.

> "Wherever she moved, wherever she stepped,
> By the light of the" morn "were seen
> Most beautiful things,"

said Fanny, slightly altering those beautiful lines.

"Yes," said Miss Ellers, "but I like best those words of the young Brahmin:

'This verily is the finger of God.'"

"What is a Brahmin?" said Ernest.

"O Ernest," replied Fanny, "don't you know that the Brahmin is an upper class among the Hindoos?"

Little Ernest, who had not heard much of upper classes, looked puzzled and ashamed. His aunt, however, explained the matter to him, and taking him to the library, showed him Hindostan on the great map of Asia, which hung there. She told him, too, of the gross idolatry of the people; that the *castes* or classes into which the people were divided were not permitted to associate with each other; and she was going on to tell him about the Brahmins when the prayer bell rang. Ernest was very sorry until his aunt told him she would continue the subject after prayers.

Gratefully did the song of praise arise

to Him who had kept them safely when the tempest raged so furiously around their dwelling, fervent was the prayer that followed; and as the family surrounded the breakfast table every heart seemed to dilate with a sense of His goodness who gave them all things so richly to enjoy.

Ernest did not forget his aunt's promise, but touching her gently said: "Aunt, please tell me about the Brahmins."

Mrs. Allen heard the little boy's question, though so quietly put, and looking at his eager face kindly said: "The Brahmins! Yes, Gertrude, let us hear about them."

"Were they from a country called Brahmin?" asked Ernest.

"No, my dear, they were called after the god they worshiped; they were the priests of Brahma, "a dumb idol!" Yes, they worshiped gods of wood, of stone, and of pottery, the works of their own hands."

"The more intelligent of them," said

Mrs. Ellers "were not only idolaters but atheists."

"Or," said Miss Ellers, "if they did believe in a god it is Budha, a being who is supposed simply to exist, that is, to live without giving any proof that he does so."

"But the Brahmin you told us about this morning," said Fanny; "tell us about him, Aunt Gertrude."

"Yes, about him," repeated the little boy.

"Well, dear, he was a young priest who came to England and was put under Dr. Adam Clarke's care. There were two of them, both young men, and Dr. Clarke, who was well versed in the languages of the East, took great pains with them. They were quick and intelligent, and he labored hard to instruct them. He found that the dogmas of their religion were best combated by the facts of science. Our little Ernest knows

'That the world is round, and, like a ball,
Seems swinging in the air.'"

That

> 'A sky extends around it all,
> And stars are shining there."

But these poor Hindoos, though versed in their country's lore, would not believe a word of it, for their sacred books informed them that the earth is one extended plain supported by water, and the water supported by air.

"O! O!" said Fanny, "that was curious enough, to make the lighter of the elements support the heavier."

"But," said Miss Ellers, "by a simple experiment he brought out the confession, and the Brahmin said, 'I see! I see that the world is round!'"

"I don't see," said Fanny, "how that could make a Christian of him."

"Why, my dear, if his sacred books asserted that the earth was flat, and you could prove to him that it was round, you would of course weaken his faith in his own religion, wouldn't you?

"These poor fellows had been told that

water became hard in winter. They would not credit it; but when Dr. Clarke showed them the delicate foliage traced by frost in one night, with awe and wonder they exclaimed: 'These leaves are the finger of God.'

"When the pond opposite the good doctor's house was frozen over, he took his pupils to it, and invited them to walk with him on the '*hardened water*.' It was not, however, until the whole family at Millbrook had assembled on it that they would venture; but as they did so, one of them exclaimed, 'We cannot tell this to our countrymen, for they would not believe us.'"

"Fanny," said Mrs. Ellers, "step into the library and bring me a book you will see on the table, bound in dark morocco."

"Yes, dear, that is it," said she; and taking the volume from Fanny, she turned to a picture which pleased Fanny and Ernest very much. The picture represented the library at Millbrook, and what

an inviting room it was. There sat the good doctor, and there his pupils in their picturesque Hindoo garb.

"Rather spare for comfort in old England," said Aunt Allen, who had taken the water and the towel from Mrs. Ellers, and was busily employed in washing the breakfast things, while also listening to the conversation.

When Susan had taken away the breakfast and rearranged the table, Miss Ellers placed her box on it, saying: "There is a depository for the articles intended for our new paper, and there is its name, 'Tis-but."

"'Tis-but!" said Fanny; "what does that mean, Aunt Gertrude?"

Mrs. Ellers looked at her with a smile, and said: "A modest title."

"Pray, Gertrude, explain its meaning," said Aunt Allen; "for I am as ignorant of it as the children."

"I believe, Aunt Allen," said Miss Ellers, "that the word was first introduced

to us by Mr. Summerfield. He told us that it was the name by which missionary boxes in his country were called, the name being first given to them by a young lady who was in the habit of saving all she could for the cause of God. When tempted to extravagance she would take down her box, deposit the money in it which she saved from dress or pleasure, saying, as she did so, ''Tis but a trifle I sacrifice.' At the end of the year, as she opened her box, she was surprised to see how considerable was the sum thus accumulated. She, therefore, called her box a 'tis-but. Many 'tis-buts were formed at the suggestion of Mr. Summerfield in this country."

"Aunt," said Fanny, "do please make me a 'tis-but."

"And me too," said Ernest.

"With pleasure, my children; but remember, your own self-denial must fill it or it will not be a genuine 'tis-but."

"Well," said Aunt Allen, "I confess I

do not see the application of the name to your paper."

"Why," said Mrs. Ellers, "to the indolent it says, ''Tis but a few pages I want, you *can't* refuse me them.' To the reader it speaks: ''Tis but the unadorned story of a child, or the unpretending narrative for one of these little ones. Pray, Mr. Critic, don't be severe."

"Yes," said little Ernest; "'tis but a little boy, that writer; what can you expect?"

"And," said his aunt, "*'tis but* simple truth in simple language that we ask of you; do not be afraid."

"I see, I see," said Mrs. Allen; "and to me it says, 'Don't be lazy, old lady; take up your pen and give the best you can.'"

"And to me," said Mrs. Ellers, "it says, 'You are passing away; 'tis but few opportunities you can have; let what *you* write have some serious end in view.'"

All looked tenderly at the beloved

saint, who, with a benignant smile, said, "Gertrude was too quick for me; I had hoped for the honor of naming the paper."

"Mamma," said Gertrude, "I am perfectly willing to give up my name for any you may choose."

"No, my dear, yours means too much to be lost; the one I had chosen was 'A Waif from the River side.'"

"Waif," said Fanny reflectively.

"Yes," said Ernest, "I know what that means, 'boat;' a *boat* to carry our thoughts."

"*Boat*," said Fanny indignantly, "I know it don't mean that!"

"Yes it does, though," said Ernest, "for when I picked up the little boat which the waves sent ashore, grandmamma said, 'There, Ernest, is a *waif* for you.'"

Grandma explained that any light object drifted along by either tide or time was called a waif; the one literally, the

other by a figure of speech called a metaphor.

Aunt Gertrude added below the word "'Tis but" her mother's title, and the box then read, "'Tis but a Waif from the River side."

And thus the waif began. One after another added their contributions to the paper, from which I have selected these succeeding pages.

I.

THE MYSTERIOUS TREASURE.

O lady fair, I have yet a gem which a purer luster flings,
Than the diamond flash of the jeweled crown on the lofty brow of kings;
A wonderful pearl of exceeding price, whose virtue shall not decay,
Whose light shall be as a spell to thee and a blessing on thy way. WHITTIER.

UPON a beautiful evening in June, a tall, fine looking man, an elderly female, and a little girl stood on the terrace, of a chateau in the southern part of France. The little girl was graceful, delicate, and simply dressed, but her *bonne** would appear a singular looking person out of the rural districts of France. She was dressed after a fashion of her own, and not in the peculiar costume of her province. Her gray hair was drawn back from her wrinkled forehead, *a la chinois*,

* Servant and nursery maid.

and fastened by a silver bodkin at the back of her head. Her very short dress was made of the gayest material, with an apron of immense width, and she wore large golden hoops in her ears. The bonne watched every motion of the little girl, and it was easy to see that Rosalie was her pet and darling as well as "papa's."

The child clapped her hands with delight as she looked at the western sky shining with brightness, and then at the lovely prospect around them. Recent showers had made everything fresh and sparkling, and the air was full of fragrance and of music. A fountain at the foot of the marble steps which led to the terrace, sprang upward to fall back again to the brimming basin in silvery music, while a little bird beside it sang in concert with the tinkling water-drops.

While the group we have described stood enjoying the beauty around them, a stranger was seen coming up the chesnut

avenue that led to the chateau. He carried a large morocco case, and when he came near, Monsieur Montaundon said to Rosalie:

"It is a peddler, my daughter, so I will give you my purse and take my leave, for these people are greater favorites of yours than of mine."

"You look tired, sir," said the kind-hearted bonne, stepping forward; "pray sit down and rest."

The stranger thanked her in a manner unusual to one in his situation of life, and sat down upon a stone bench at the end of the terrace.

"What have you pretty to sell, sir?" said the little girl, going up to the stranger with her eyes fixed upon his pack. "Lace, flowers, and ribbons? Please show me something very handsome, that will do for a present to my good bonne."

"Mademoiselle, I have neither lace, flowers, nor ribbons, yet I carry more valuable articles than these."

"Perhaps monsieur hawks jewels," said the bonne, "though I should not imagine it from the size of his pack."

"My pack, madame, does contain jewels of great value, presents from a Great King, to be freely distributed to his subjects."

"You speak in riddles, monsieur; will you allow us to see your treasures?"

"With great pleasure, madame, and if you become their owner you will value them more and more highly. They will prove charms to make you happy in life and take away the fear of death."

"They must be medals from the shrine of St. Eutrope," the bonne answered quickly; "or perhaps rosaries blessed by the holy father at Rome. I have heard of wonderful cures being wrought by them."

The stranger shook his head, but the garrulous bonne proceeded:

"If they would keep death away they would be worth buying! That is a sad

word even to speak, and the thought of it is so terrible! But what more of your mysterious package, monsieur?"

The stranger continued with a pleasant smile:

"I have a mirror which pictures a more charming country than even our beautiful France, and with it are directions to teach you how to become an inheritor of it."

"Monsieur," said Rosalie, blushing very deeply, "your talk is like the fairy tales I read. Pray show us the wonderful things you speak of."

"Yes, do if you please, monsieur," said the bonne, "for you talk to us in riddles of your jewels, charms, and mirrors."

The stranger then opened his pack, which, to their surprise, instead of jewels and charms, contained only books.

The good-natured bonne smiled and said:

"The gentleman has been amusing himself with us. But these books may contain recipes from some learned book

to restore youth and bring back beauty. If so they are valuable enough to deserve all his praise."

But the stranger saw that Rosalie was disappointed and hurt, and he said:

"My dear young lady, pardon me if I have seemed to trifle with you. You will find that I have not done so if you will condescend to take one of my books and read it. They are Bibles, and that sacred volume truly possesses all the virtues I have ascribed to it."

Just then they were again joined by M. Montaundon, to whom the visitor turned and said:

"Monsieur, I am a colporteur of Bibles, and should be most happy to dispose of one to your daughter or yourself."

M. Montaundon had little knowledge of the Bible, and no respect for it, so his answer is not to be wondered at. "I regret," he said, "that you should have taken a long walk upon a profitless errand, but neither my daughter nor my-

self need your book. Our libraries are amply supplied."

"May I take the liberty of asking if monsieur's library contains a Bible? Many persons think that the finest collection of books is incomplete without that most curious and ancient work."

"My fathers before me were good Catholics, and had no Bibles; and I, who have not a tithe of their religion, may well dispense with the book," he answered.

"This is a book that will make you wiser than your fathers," continued the young man, "for it contains the lore of past ages, and the wisest persons who have ever written have not hesitated to acknowledge that they drew their highest inspiration from it. How our Pascal loved and reverenced it, monsieur! What a joy were its words to him in life, and how they clung to him in death! And Fenelon, how noble is his eulogy upon the sacred book!"

M. Montaundon listened coldly to the speech of the stranger, and without the least reply to it turned to his daughter and said:

"Rosalie, my child, return the book to its owner, and come to the house with me. It is damp, and you have not been quite well."

But Rosalie had opened a Bible at the nineteenth chapter of St. Matthew, and was absorbed "in that sweet story of old" which she found recorded there. The few verses which contain the account of one of the sweetest and most engaging acts of the Saviour's life illustrated a picture which hung in her father's study. From her earliest childhood it had been an object of interest to her. It hung near a window, and when the western sun shone upon it it made that full benevolent eye and parted hair appear to glow with such living light that the child could hardly persuade herself that the figures were not breathing forms, and almost ex-

pected to see them step forth from the gilded frame. She had often asked about the picture. The answer was always the same: "It is Christ blessing little children."

"What little children? Who said they might come?" she constantly asked; but no explanation was given her. The story told in our schools each succeeding Sunday, the tender, encouraging words which every infant scholar can repeat, had not been taught to Rosalie. So they came fresh and new to her as she stood by the stone balustrade clustered with roses and read: "Suffer little children to come unto the me, and forbid them not, for of such is kingdom of heaven." She had become so absorbed that her father was obliged to speak to her a second time before she heard him. Then she said:

"O dearest papa, I must buy this book! The words of Jesus are beautiful, and he was so kind and good." The bonne was truly surprised to hear her father, for the

first time in his life, refuse the request of his daughter. Her health was delicate, and, as she was sensitive and imaginative, M. Montaundon always tried to keep her from everything of an exciting nature. He now had a vague idea that the Bible, which he had never read, might have an unhealthy influence upon her mind. He had not heard the remark of the dying saint,* so true and so well attested by the experience of others, that "it is one of the great excellences of the Bible that it contains so little that is exciting to the weakest nerves." So M. Montaundon took his little daughter by the hand and led her away, after taking the Bible from her and handing it back to the colporteur.

The latter received the book with a disappointed air; but after they had turned away the bonne stepped up to him and, pulling out her silver-netted purse, said: "Monsieur, I may be doing wrong, but

* Mrs. S. L. Smith, of the Syrian Mission.

my child must not be disappointed and grieved. Therefore, whether your books be evil or good, and I have heard both said of them, I must have one to smuggle to the little darling."

The colporteur hesitated a moment and then replied:

"I would gladly leave a Bible for the young lady without wishing any other compensation than to know she will read it, but if I were to do so in a clandestine manner it would prejudice monsieur the more against it. I think he will yet consent to her having one, and as I shall stay to-night at the hamlet below with Pierre Millè, the mason, and pass this way again to-morrow, I can readily leave a Bible then if it is desired. If I hear nothing, however, I will yet, madame, place one in the hands of Pierre to be sent to you when I am gone."

The bonne, who had seen much good society, was struck by the graceful and easy manner of the stranger, and said:

"Monsieur, I cannot but express my surprise at such language and deportment from one engaged in your very humble occupation. I must believe that your birth and education are superior to the position which you at present occupy."

The colporteur replied: "When I embraced the religion of Jesus I bade adieu to pride and the desire of worldly distinction. The Bible illuminated my mind, and I feel that in placing it in the hands of my fellow-creatures I do them an inestimable service, and give them a rich boon of Heaven. O madame, that book tells a wonderful story; a story in which you and I are equally interested! It tells us that we are sinners, whom Jesus Christ died to save; and it also gives us the delightful assurance that if we believe on him we are justified in his sight, and that there remains no condemnation for us."

The ardent manner of the stranger touched the lively feelings of the bonne.

"Ah, sir," she said, "many years ago I heard something like this from my mother. She told me that I sinned daily, and that I should go to the priest for absolution. Of late, however, I do not hear such things, for religion is no longer fashionable in France. Our chapels are neglected; our priests are not reverenced. I often think I would like to confess to one. It would lighten my heart; it would do me good."

"Believe it not, madame, believe it not," the young man quickly said. "It would do you no good. Only the great High Priest who has passed into the heavens can absolve you. Look up to him, I entreat you, to forgive the sins that now burden your soul."

Tears stood in the eyes of the bonne at the earnestness of the stranger. But it was time for him to go on his way; and with the words he had spoken dwelling in her mind, to be remembered in after years, he bade her adieu, and again passed

through the avenue gate to the hamlet at the base of the hill.

It is evening, and little Rosalie is in the library with her father. This is her favorite room, but now she is spiritless and sad. Yet it is a charming spot, and abounds with everything to please a refined and delicate taste. It is the room dearest to Rosalie since she was a very little child. There hangs the picture that so entranced her childish fancy. There, between the long, arched windows, stand the volumes that are just beginning to have an interest for her. To this room she only has access during her father's hours of study. Her little tap, from the time she could toddle to the door with her playthings in her hands, was the "sesame" that opened it. Then she would sit down on the polished floor with her doll in her lap, and play for hours at her father's feet. She was always a loving child, and he a doting father. He had never until that afternoon denied her any-

thing she desired. But he has since relented, and when he sees an expression of childish sorrow on her face says:

"Come to your father, Rosalie," and she springs into his arms. "Would that book make you very happy, my daughter?"

"O yes, dear papa, yes!"

"Now see, my little girl, I can deny you nothing. To-morow I will send to Toulouse for a Bible, and if one cannot be found there I will dispatch an order to Paris; so let us go to dinner and be very happy."

Before they retired for the night the bonne had permission to send a special messenger to the hamlet for the colporteur and his Bible. He came early in the morning, and found Rosalie and her attendant up, dressed, and waiting for him on the terrace, now shaded, fragrant, and dewy. Rosalie, with a flush of pleasure, stepped forward to meet the colporteur, saying:

"Monsieur, my papa consents to my purchasing a book. Please let me choose one of the color I like."

So the little girl, after looking them all over and consulting the bonne a great many times, at length selected a very beautiful Bible with a blue cover and gilt edges. After she had paid for it she commenced turning over the leaves to find the part she had read on the previous evening, when the colporteur said:

"My dear young lady, when I am many leagues away I will still pray to God through our Lord Jesus Christ to make this book a blessing to you. In it you will read the account of the life and death of our dear Saviour; and will you not remember that his weary life and sorrowful death were borne that your life might be peaceful and your death hopeful. Let us pray that he himself would teach us to understand all the words he has here given us. You have read how he blessed young children when he was upon earth.

He loves them still. He will bless all who come to him."

Many more encouraging words did the good colporteur speak before he parted with Rosalie and the bonne, and both felt as if they had lost a faithful friend when he disappeared at the foot of the hill. We will accompany him to another scene of his labor before we relate the effect that her recent acquisition had upon the mind of Rosalie.

Through solitary fields, divided by trenches instead of fences, over chalky roads, by irregular hamlets and dilapidated chateaus, Dumont, for that was the name of the colporteur, pursued his steady way until he came to a field kept fresh and green by a little stream which intersected it. Women were engaged in washing linen in the running water, for this purpose stamping it with their feet as well as rubbing it with their hands before they spread it on the grass to dry. Beyond the fields was a farmhouse, reached

by a winding path through the meadow. A high wall, with arched gateway and folding doors, surrounded a court with a well in the center, and crowded with granaries, hen-houses, and corn-cribs. All spoke of wealth, plenty, and industry. The house had the usual overhanging roof and outside stairs common to that description of dwelling, with ample doors set wide open. Dumont walked toward them, and saw an ancient-looking hall, paved with tiles, in the middle of which was a long table, surrounded by sunburnt laborers in coarse blouses. At the head of the table sat a large, stern man, who was evidently the master, although his blue blouse was of the same fashion and material as that of his servants. On the table was bread and cheese, with porridge made of maize or corn boiled in milk. There were large stone flagons, filled with wine, which was handed around in small stone mugs by coarse-looking servant girls. Dumont entered the room with a polite

salutation, which was returned by the host, accompanied by a hearty invitation for him to join their noontide meal.

"With great pleasure if Farmer Maniér will first rid me of this little burden I carry," said Dumont, presenting a Bible as he spoke.

The farmer's brow darkened, and his whole manner changed as he answered: "No, monsieur; I set no value on such stuff. We work, not read."

Dumont was accustomed to rebuffs. His countenance did not alter in the least.

"Go on with your dinner, and allow me to read you a short lesson from the book you are unacquainted with."

"Monsieur, I invited you to eat, not preach."

"I will eat presently; but in the mean time permit me to read a few words," said the colporteur, with a manner which the farmer could not resist. He had his lesson by heart, and quickly opening on

the seventh of Ephesians, he commenced reading the lesson to servants contained in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth verses, in a full and melodious voice. When he had finished the eighth verse he said, "Is not this good doctrine?"

"Excellent! most excellent!" said the farmer, who had listened very earnestly. "Read it over again, if you please. Listen, all of you!" he continued, smiting his huge brown hand upon the table with such force that the mugs and platters trembled. "This is a good book; some say it is divine; but whether so or not, it gives you good advice. Are there more of such fine sentiments in it?"

"Others equally good. It addresses masters as well as servants. It is the book for all. It gives advice to husbands and wives, to children and to parents."

"Ah! perhaps, then, my lazy Claude will be the better for it. Can you find some words for a young gentleman who

almost objected to help his old father work this morning, on the plea of his own superior engagements? There he sits," said the farmer, pointing to a shamefaced youth opposite to him.

"Yes, as I tell you, it has words for all. And Monsieur Claude will find them not unkind and threatening ones, but gentle and persuasive. If there is authority in the book, there is also extreme love and tenderness." And then Dumont repeated the first three verses of the chapter from which we have previously quoted, which contained exhortations to children on the duty of honoring their parents.

"Better and better," shouted the farmer; "I will take your book. What is the cost?" And he was not offended when, upon receiving it, Dumont gently begged him to make the fourth and eighth verses his peculiar study. So, spreading the priceless treasure, the manna from heaven, wherever man would receive it, did Dumont walk

through the length and breadth of his native country for many months, and it was only when he was called to another, if not a higher sphere of usefulness, that he relinquished what to him appeared to be the most glorious of vocations.

We left Rosalie happy in the possession of the book she had coveted. She read its beautiful stories eagerly. Those of us who have always had the Bible in our hands can hardly imagine how it interested her. A series of lovely pictures appeared suddenly placed before her eyes. We all remember the charm of a first reading of the Arabian Nights, but the scenes in the Bible have more power over the mind of a child, because they are more briefly and simply sketched, and because they touch the sympathies as well as captivate the imagination. While Rosalie wondered over Jacob's golden ladder, with the heavenly beings that went up and down upon it, she likewise pitied the lonely wanderer who had only a stone on

which to rest his weary head. She followed Joseph through all the varieties of his life, wept over his sorrows, and rejoiced in his prosperity, as if she had a personal interest in him. She delighted in the sweet images of pastoral life which the Old Testament constantly gives us,

> "The camel's train
> Winding in patience o'er the desert plain;
> The tent, the palm-tree, the reposing flock,
> The gleaming fount, the shadow of the rock."

How deeply she pitied Hagar, casting her child under the shrub in the desert, and then going away from him that she might not see him die! Then she wondered that the great God should listen to the cry of a child; but in after years that circumstance, so simply told, gave her courage and strength in prayer.

When Rosalie had read the narratives of the Bible she was attracted by its poetry, and she read the Prophets and the Psalms; but the Song of Solomon was

most frequently read and the longest remembered. Her ear was charmed by its melody, and her mind captivated by its gorgeous imagery. She often read aloud to her bonne, who never tired of her darling's voice. Thus the words and facts of the Bible were lodged in their memories, although they had little understanding of its spiritual import.

Several years passed in Rosalie's life, during which other studies and occupations had in a great measure banished the Bible from her mind. It still occupied a place on her book-shelves, however, and was associated with much that was beautiful and lovely in her memory. Rosalie was an only child, and her mother had died in her early infancy. The only want she had ever known in her beautiful home was a companion of her own age. This want was now supplied by a lovely little orphan cousin, who came to the chateau to live with them.

Little Bertha was full of life and glee.

Her beauty and animation seemed to impart new vivacity to Rosalie, who was of an unusually grave and thoughtful nature. Rosalie became a child once more for little Bertha's sake. Her old play-room in the turret was fitted up for the new comer, and the costly toys, for many years laid aside, were now brought out for Bertha. The large Paris doll was redressed, the costly set of China, which had been marked with the initials of her name, was set upon the table, and Rosalie, Bertha, and the doll sat down to drink coffee together.

Bertha had a special love for flowers, which Rosalie delighted to gratify, although old André the gardener often shook his head and shrugged his shoulders when Rosalie rifled his conservatory for her little darling.

"Dear André," the young lady would say in defense, "it is so pleasant to have something to pet. You and bonne have have had the pleasure of spoiling me, and

I am sure you should allow me the same indulgence for sweet little Bertha."

Andre's only reply to Rosalie would be a smile and a fresh supply of regal exotics.

Bertha, like most other children, had an unsatisfied craving for stories. "Tell me more," she would always say as soon as one was ended.

"You would exhaust the Princess Schenerzade herself, Bertha," said M. Montaundon to her one evening as she sat upon his knee; "you never hear enough."

"Never," said Rosalie; "and her memory is so retentive that she does not care to hear the same story twice. What shall we do for her, papa?"

"Take her out in the air at present, which you both need."

Little Bertha was soon in the pursuit of a butterfly, which she could not catch, so she asked Rosalie to take her to the pheasantry. The sun had just gone behind the hills, and left a sky tinted with varying hues of beauty.

"Do you see those pretty clouds, Bertha?" asked Rosalie.

"Yes; who lives there, Rose?"

"Good people, angels," said her cousin, with some remembrances of past readings in the Bible crossing her mind.

"Who told you so, Rose?"

"A book I have at home."

"Will you read it to me?"

"Yes, to-morrow."

"*Tableaux*, Rose? O tell me! tell me now!"

"No, here we are at Pierre's."

When they entered the gate little Bertha forgot her curiosity in her admiration of the poultry, bees, and rabbits; but the next day she remembered Rosalie's promise, and insisted on her story. So Rosalie drew forth her lately neglected Bible, and partly read and partly told Bertha of the good man who went up to heaven in a chariot of fire. She listened to the story with wondering eyes.

"Didn't he burn up, Rose?"

No. 705.

Looking at Pierre's Poultry, Rabbits, etc.

"No, darling," it was not the fire that burns; it was like that we saw in the clouds last evening."

"O Rose, I would like to go up in a fiery chariot," said little Bertha. "I would like to fly up, up, like the birds."

The next day Bertha did not appear well, and a physician was sent for. He could not arrest her disease; neither love nor skill could save her; and on the fourth day after her attack the little creature who had thrown such happiness and joy around her died, amid the tears and lamentations of those who had learned to love her so fondly.

It was the first time that Rosalie had looked upon death, and it appeared to throw a cold shadow over her life. It seemed to her that a blessing had been sent only to mock her. She could not recover from the shock. Her interest in everything was gone. Neither books, music, nor conversation solaced her. Her father, alarmed for her health, wished to

take her to Paris. But to this she could not consent. The bonne followed her like a shadow, and tried to interest her in surrounding objects. But it was a wet and cold season of the year, and nature, which sometimes speaks soothingly to a sorrowful heart, had not its usual beauty to offer. But there was relief in store.

The Bible has been compared to boats which ferry the Western rivers, and not being needed in summer are moored to the shore. But when heavy rains have swollen the streams, and the ford is impassable, travelers eagerly look out for the only convenience that will enable them to cross the dangerous flood. And thus it was with Rosalie. She had forded the transparent stream of life with joyous feet, but the waters had risen around her, and by her own strength she could not stem the flood which seemed likely to overwhelm her. It was for the bonne, the kindly loving bonne, not from her head, but her heart, to suggest a source of consolation to her.

One day they sat together in Rosalie's boudoir, a little room in which her father's love had grouped every object that could gratify her taste for beauty and for art. But the rain descended on the sodden leaves in the path, and Rosalie's heart was as chilly as the season. The bonne looked at her young charge with anxious eyes. At length she said:

"My darling, there are some words you used to love to say when you were a little child which come to my mind now. They are, 'Suffer little children to come unto me . . . of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Who said them?"

"Jesus," replied Rosalie, with falling tears.

The bonne wept also. She had a tender, loving heart.

"Suppose you get the Bible and read that part of it over to me again. It will bring back past days. I think I see you now, my darling, standing among the roses in your white dress, so curiously turning

over the leaves of the book the good colporteur brought us. That is a wonderful book, and it speaks of worlds above. Cannot we there find some tidings of our little Bertha's home. She seemed like an angel here, and I think she has gone above to be where angels live."

This was a long speech for the once frivolous bonne to make. But as she grew old she had begun to think of the future. The path to the grave seemed dark before her. She often wished that some light could be thrown upon it. Sometimes with these thoughts would come to her remembrance fragments of the colporteur's conversation with her. It was all intertwined with the Bible, and she began to wish to examine it more thoroughly.

"If she has gone where the angels live she is in her true home," said Rosalie, in reply to the bonne's words. "She cannot have perished. If the flowers fade they bloom again. O no! nothing perishes—least of all, loveliness and intelligence like

that which belonged to our precious Bertha."

Rosalie brought the Bible and read the words of Jesus. The simple expression, 'of such is the kingdom of heaven," comforted her more than volumes of philosophy could have done. All that she read had a soothing influence upon her. She began to love the Bible, and to wish to understand it better. She tried to do the works of Jesus. She began to visit and to comfort the poor.

In thus doing she was soon happy enough to find one to whom the Bible had for many years been an unsealed book. Rosalie's Bible had been sent to her, as we have seen, in the glory and beauty of summer scenes; but this next best gift, a Christian friend, was found amid other circumstances in the neighboring city. In a narrow court, never sunny in summer nor light in winter, and where no glimpse of sky could be ever seen, lived one who found light and comfort in God's word

amid the darkness and discomfort of her earthly lot. Susette had lost the use of her lower limbs, but was thankful for the use of her hands, by which she gained a living, such as it was, without being assisted by charity. Her parents had made her familiar with the Bible in early life. They were descended from the heroic band who for so many years were persecuted for their religion among the Cevennes mountains, and trial and suffering had taught them the full value of the word of God. So Susette had rich provision laid up in the storehouse of memory for the "days of darkness" that had come upon her. A beautiful friendship sprang up between that graceful, high-born young lady and the poor infirm cripple. Rosalie was content to sit at her feet and learn the way to Jesus. Through Susette's teachings much that had appeared mysterious in the Bible was laid open to her comprehension. Susette's personal experience gave her a key to open it.

Still another pleasure awaited them one day after the bonne and Rosalie ascended the rickety stairs that led to poor Susette's humble room. They found their benefactor Dumont, little altered in appearance or manner, sitting beside Susette's bed. He had called to see her on his way to his mountain home. Dumont told them he lived "like an eagle among the cliffs," where he had a little chapel "as simple in its architecture as it was sublime in its situation." He preached to a company of workmen who, by great exertions, had built a house for worship amid the sublime scenery where their manufactories stood.

It was a memorable interview to both his old friends, and they were strengthened and comforted by it. Before he saw them he had rejoiced to learn that the seed he had sown was bearing fruit in their hearts and lives, and he left them with St. Paul's exhortation: "Be ye followers of God as dear children, and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us."

The Bible comforted the good bonne in her last hours. Its precious promises, repeated to her by the voice of her child, as she ever considered Rosalie, were a light through the valley of death, which had appeared so dark and terrible to her in former days.

And Rosalie lived to form her character upon the basis of the Gospel, and "in the silent growth of grace and light" to exemplify its precepts in her life and conversation. Thus she became not only a blessing to her own family, but a benefactor to her neighborhood. Ever led by the Holy Spirit, she made those who looked upon her learn, in a sense, that the poet who wrote the words could hardly himself understand

"How divine a thing
A woman can be made."

II.

THE PRESIDING ELDER'S STORY.*

A VERY eccentric local preacher was one morning sitting in his shop. His hands were busily engaged with the implements of his craft, while his mind, entirely estranged from that craft, was soaring aloft in the regions of speculation, or diving deep into the mysteries of the unseen and unknown world toward which he was tending. Abstracted from earth and all its groveling concerns, he was like one who dreamed. From this state he was aroused by a shrill voice inquiring, "Want to buy any oysters, sir?"

He looked up; a vacant face was obtruded into his open window; the hat on, from whose broken crown the elf-locks

* Facts given by the late Rev. P. P. Sandford. Story written from memory some years after having heard it from him.

were streaming wildly; the whole countenance was one of inanity, unconcern, or low concern.

The local preacher was aroused, not awakened from his reverie, and in reply to the question he said gravely and impressively: "If you do nothing better than sell oysters, you'll *go to hell and be damned.*"

"Anan?" said the seller of oysters, putting his hand to his ear, his countenance meanwhile borrowing no other expression from the tones of the speaker than one of simple curiosity.

"If you don't do anything better than sell oysters," again repeated the preacher, in a deeper and more earnest tone, "you'll go to hell and be damned."

The oyster-man turned away, and not until then did the preacher recover his scattered senses. When he did, he reflected upon himself, so absent, so abrupt, to give such an answer to such a question. He rose, went to the door, called the man

back, bought his oysters, and gave him some words of counsel. Soon after this incident the local preacher left the city.

About fourteen years after it occurred he attended a quarterly meeting in the country. He sat in the pulpit behind the preachers during the love-feast. Among those who arose to speak was a man who gave the following account of his conversion:

"About fourteen years ago I was living without hope and without God in the world, in a state of heathen ignorance and blindness. By trade I was an oyster-man, and one day I put my head into a saddler's shop where an elderly gentleman was sitting at work. I asked him if he wanted to buy any oysters, and he said to me: "If you don't do anything better than sell oysters you'll go to hell and be damned—if you don't do anything better than sell oysters you'll go to hell and be damned.' I had to ride a good many miles to get to my home that night, and as I rode along I

repeated to myself over and over again, 'If I don't do anything better than sell oysters I shall go to hell and be damned.' These words, though I did not understand them, made such an impression on me that I could not get rid of them. I meditated on them until I reached home, and as soon as I entered my door I said to my wife: 'Mary, do you know that if I don't do anything better than sell oysters I shall go to hell and be damned?' 'Yes,' said she, 'I *do know it*,' (for she was better instructed than I.) I sat down beside her and she burst into tears. I said to her, 'Mary, can you read?' I did not know a letter. She said, 'I can spell,' 'Have you a book in the house?' 'I have a bit of one,' said she. I begged her to get it. She got upon a chair, and among some rubbish in the cupboard she found a few leaves of the Bible. She spelt it to me word by word as I sat beside her on the hearth, the old gentleman's words all the while sounding in my ears—she

spelt it for me and we both wept together. 'It is time for us to do better,' said she. My heart answered, 'It is,' and the leaf said the same thing. We sat up all night mingling our tears, our wishes, and our prayers. Early the next morning we went out to seek for some one who could instruct us. None ever sought the Lord in vain, and we have found godliness profitable, both for this life and the life to come. We learned to read the word of God; we found out the ministers of the Gospel, our house became their home, and a society was established there of which I am now the leader."

While he spoke his countenance was an index of the change which had passed upon the whole man. You might read as in a book how that once vacant face became irradiated by the new views, new aims, and new pursuits which expanded his mind; that the knowledge of the Bible had introduced other books; comparative affluence followed his well-directed efforts

and influence; for he who was once a cypher in the community was now respected and beloved. But he had an ardent, burning desire ungratified—to see him whose words were found to be the power of God to the salvation of his soul. "O that I might see him!" he exclaimed; "I know not who he was. I have sought for him with great desire, but never have been able to find him," and as he said this the tears trickled down his cheeks.

While he was relating his experience the local preacher, concealed by the pulpit, sat inly wondering, and as he repeated the last words he rose on his feet to see if the speaker were really the same man he had so strangely accosted. As his face emerged from behind the preachers the oyster-man caught a glimpse of it, and with ecstacy exclaimed:

"That's he; I have found him, I have found him!" and pressing through the crowded aisle, and ascending the pulpit, as he caught the aged man in his arms,

he still exultingly exclaimed, "I have found him! I have found him!"

"Well," said the local preacher as he parted with his newly-found disciple, (after he had ascertained his place of abode, and the country he was to pass in reaching it,) "I have one favor to ask of you. Do you know where old John B. lives?"

"Yes, I pass by his door."

"Well, stop there and tell old John that I will preach at his house next Wednesday at three o'clock, and that he must give out my appointment in his neighborhood. Do not, however, trust to him to give it out, but as you ride along tell the news to those you may meet at the houses you pass; and should old John or old Sarah hesitate, tell them that if they refuse to let me preach at their house it will be the worse for themselves. Old John has owed me a sum of money these six years, and my message will remind him of the debt."

Wednesday came and found our old friend riding quietly through the wood, meditating as he went on the darkness and ignorance of the region he was visiting. As he approached the place of his destination he was surprised at the number of rude vehicles which surrounded it. The house was crowded both inside and outside with a motley and untutored audience, and the minister on entering found that old John had opened his doors, and had prepared the whole of his humble habitation for the reception of the congregation.

After breathing a short prayer the preacher sat down and looked upon his audience. Their eyes were fixed on him in dumb amazement, their countenances as vacant as if one thought of God or of eternity had never lingered there. Their stupid stare, if it expressed anything, said, What have we all come to hear? What news has he to tell us? He knew their ignorance, and felt as if his message

to them would be rather incomprehensible or disbelieved. He saw their apathy, and felt how difficult must be the task of arousing them to a subject which in its nature was spiritual and refined. How shall I awaken their interest? how shall I command their attention? thought he, as with his head reclined on his hand he sat in puzzled silence. Recollecting that the place was much infested with skunks, and that a large bounty had been laid upon their heads, with the combined eccentricity and shrewdness of his character he determined to seize on this incident as a means of gaining their ear at least. He therefore arose and said:

"Friends, would you like to know the very best manner of catching skunks?"

Instantly every eye was fixed with an eager and more intelligent gleam upon him, and he saw he had touched the right chord; and when he had gained their entire and pleased attention, in his

own peculiar and abrupt manner he changed the subject, saying, "I have now another story to tell you, which is of much greater importance to your welfare. A great while ago the world was very wicked; it was filled with violence and wrong; neighbors hated and envied each other," and he drew a picture of the antediluvian world with a precision and simplicity which would apply to the practices and feelings of many of his hearers; and as he saw the truths which he announced reflected back from the amazed countenances around him, he would appeal to old John, who sat beside him, saying, "John can tell you that these things are so, for John has read the good book." He then told them of God's displeasure at sin, and of the overwhelming judgment which condemned it, and then renewing his appeal to John he said: "John, you can tell them that this is true, and that God is thus terrible in his punishment of sin; but perhaps you will tell them, John, that God has promised

never again to drown the earth, and that as long as the world remaineth seed time and harvest shall not fail. Well, that is true, John; so he did. But I have another story to tell you," said he, and he then drew a vivid sketch of the inhabitants of the plain, and then of the fiery storm which overtook them. And then turning to John he said: "There, John, you cannot say that God promised never to destroy the earth by fire, for he has said that he would appear in flaming fire, taking vengeance on his enemies." From general he now proceeded to individual cases, and taking old John and old Sarah, he drew a picture of their life, a life of sin; brought old John down to his death-bed; and as he described the misery of the poor old couple living in poverty and in sin, and one of them dying in disgrace and without hope; as he, in his simple and graphic manner, described the corpse of poor old John stretched upon his bed, while old Sarah was wringing her hands

and weeping that she had not a sheet to wrap it in, responsive sobs were heard all around him; and as the catastrophe deepened, and the miserable pair were brought to that burning which awaits the impenitent, when the drop of water importunately asked is asked in vain, the agony was felt in every direction, and amid the sobs, and groans, and passionate grief of his audience the preacher made his exit, mounted his horse, and directed his steps homeward.

As soon as his audience were aware of his absence they left the house. Those who had horses mounted them, and in the most earnest manner besought him not to leave them thus. He appointed preaching there again. On his return he found an interested and interesting audience, many of whom found the pearl of great price. Old John's humble dwelling became the birthplace of souls. A large society was raised. Again the wilderness budded and blossomed as the rose. And

the old preacher, in closing the narration of this remarkable revival, used to say, "And I never troubled old John for the debt he owed me."

III.

ALLIE AT THE WELL.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.—
MATT. v, 8.

A charming day it was in May,
  When violets, white and blue,
Upon the meadow's grassy breast
  In fragrant clusters grew;
With golden flowers that children pluck,
  When through the fields they rove,
And use them as a charm to prove
  How much they butter love.

The lilac blossoms in the hedge,
  The bird his mate doth call,
And in the distance there is heard
  The foaming waterfall.
The guelder-roses down the walk,
  The wind-flowers in the wood,
Like soldiers tall and faries small,
  Are by the south wind wooed.

Sweet briers, with their scented breath,
  Round cottage windows climb,

While round the iron trellis-work
  Thick-leaved glycenas wind.
A little child is underneath
  That willow old and bent,
Which, spreading wide on every side,
  Enfolds her like a tent.

And as she there, in garment white,
  With dreaming eyes doth stand,
She seems a waif to our dull world,
  Sent from the seraph land.
She glideth on toward a well,
  Hemmed in by rugged stone,
To pick the moss that busy years
  Have o'er it thickly strown.

Then up she climbs, and, looking down,
  Keeps softly smiling there;
While streams of sunlight through the trees
  Are playing with her hair.
They seem to place a golden crown
  Upon her baby brow,
Like that with which Correggio loved
  His cherubs to endow.

Still smiles the child while looking down
  That deep unfathomed well;

Nor hears her pet names loudly called
With clear and jocund swell:
"Ho, Allie! little bird, and mouse!"
Cried one who running came,
By brook, and tree, and scolloped fern,
From out the tangled lane.

"What do you there, young runaway?
You little wandering bird?
How dare you think of standing so
Upon a slippery curb?"
A merry laugh from Allie's lips
Rang out all loud and clear:
"O Brother Paul, don't be afraid!
For I see *Dod* down here."

Strange awe came o'er her brother's face,
But it was all dispelled
When looking down, as round her waist
His sturdy arms he held.*
"I tell you there is nothing here,
You cunning little one;
No mark save, on the water dark,
A spot of shining sun."

"But, Brother Paul, *Dod* is down there;
Just see his eyes so bright;

* See Frontispiece.

Mamma did say the other day,
  'He dwelleth in the light.'"
And evermore that little child
  Would say the self-same word,
Although her Brother Paul affirmed,
  "It cannot be the Lord."

He took her hand, and led her straight
  Toward their pleasant home,
An ivy-wrapt and lowly house
  Of gray unchiseled stone.
A rolling lawn around it lay,
  With flower-beds sprinkled through,
And vases full of stately plants
  Of varied form and hue.

Close by the casement, diamond-paned,
  A painted cage was hung,
Wherein a little foreign bird
  His merry solo sung.
His brilliant feathers seemed to thrill
  As Allie homeward ran,
And at her voice his louder grew,
  And blyther song began.

A lovely lady, clad in black,
  Was sitting by the door,
Whom Allie called her "dear mamma,"
  And told her o'er and o'er,

How she saw God adown the well,
  In "such a sunny spot."
"He loves me, and he smiled, mamma,
  Though Paul believes me not."

With moistened eyes the lady laid
  Her hand upon the child,
And it would seem she did not deem
  Her words were strange or wild.
She only said: "O may it be
  That He whom thou didst see,
My darling, in the mossy well,
  May ever smile on thee!"

L. A. H.

IV.

THE PICNIC.

"Our mirth is not afraid of thee;
Our life rejoices to be bright;
We would not from our gladness flee,
But give full welcome to delight."

T. H. GILL.

"A gipsy fire we kindled on the shore
With" oak "trees fringed; and there,
Merrily seated in a ring, partook
The beverage drawn from" Java's "fragrant herb."

WORDSWORTH.

"Do you think it will rain, Charles? It would be a sad disappointment to us all if it did," said Ellen Oswald, a little girl of eleven, to her cousin, a boy of twelve.

They were standing with a group of children on the verandah of a cottage, and two little boys looked up anxiously for the response from their tall cousin.

"Those are pretty dark, heavy clouds,

and it does look very much like rain; but mother thinks it will only be a shower, and we would not mind that, would we, boys?"

"No, indeed!" cried George and Willie; "that would be great fun; and here come the wagons."

Little Sophie clapped her hands, and begged to go into the wagon to drive Old Gray; and Frank, a curly-headed noble boy of four years old, was lifted in beside her for the brief enjoyment of five minutes.

Large well-filled baskets were brought out and placed in the wagon, and then Ellen's father, and uncle, and aunt, and her two little brothers got into the first wagon. "Aunt Ada is going to drive with four Mr. Oswalds," said Ellen. "I hope she will have a pleasant time."

Ellen took her place beside Charles, who drove the second wagon, and Charles's mother and aunt sat behind.

Sophie and Frank looked rather mourn-

fully up the hill at the retreating wagons and the vanishing form of Old Gray; but they were consoled with the prospect of having their own little picnic in the woods. A short drive brought our friends to the village, where they were to meet the rest of the party; and while awaiting their arrival the children were much amused at the busy scene that presented itself. It was market-day, and the streets were all astir with the farmers' wagons laden with produce for the barge that carried its weekly load to the great city. Firkins of butter, calves, and sheep crowded together filled the large lumber wagons.

"Look! there are six sheep in that wagon," said Ellen; "how sorry they must have been to leave their pleasant green fields."

"A ride cannot be much enjoyment to them," replied Charles; "and then they will have a doleful night on the barge, wailing and baaing all down the river."

"Do you think they know they are going to their death?" asked Ellen.

"Look at that poor calf; he really seems to know it. What an agony he is in; how he pants, as if there was some great terror before him!"

"The sheep are much more quiet and tranquil. Don't you remember, Charles, it was said of the Saviour that 'he was led as a lamb to the slaughter.' I think I understand that expression better now after looking at those poor innocent, harmless sheep."

"Here come the other carriages," exclaimed George, calling out from the wagon in front; "now we are ready to start."

A carriage with two horses drove up, and greetings were exchanged with Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, and the Misses Stevenson, Mrs. Herbert's two sisters. In the wagon were two young men, Mr. Russell and Dr Elton.

The clouds shrouded the heavens as

they drove eastward, and the wind blew in their faces, ominous of a storm. But the drive was the more agreeable for the friendly screen, and with cheerful faces and merry voices the party drove onward. The road was excellent, and at each moment some object of interest was presented. A high conical hill, divided to the top in sectional fields of grain, was recognized as one the other side of which had been often admired from the road near their own home, and many wishes were expressed to see the magnificent view that far-looking hill must command. The wealth of grain on its fruitful bosom had evidently enriched its owner, whose pretty white farm-house, with its long ample front, its green blinds, and latticed porch, looked the very abode of comfort. An old man stood leaning on one of those old-fashioned doors that open horizontally in the center, and the venerable head was framed as in a picture.

It was the time of harvest, and men

were mowing in the fields, while others were seated on the mowing machine which so rapidly cuts its broad track through the tall grass. The corn looked most luxuriant, waving its verdant honors more loftily, and brought into bolder relief on the close shaven fields now so distinct in outline.

"Look at those maples, Charles," said Ellen; "did you ever see such grand ones? how round and dense their foliage is. And what are those beautiful clusters of white flowers?"

"Why, Ellie, don't you know those are potato blossoms? They do look larger than any I have ever seen."

"I thought they were purple," said Ellen.

"Well, there are some purple ones too. How pretty and comfortable all those farm-houses look; everything is so neat about them."

"Charles," said his mother as they drove in a cool shade, "we must stop and

get some water from that well by the road side. How inviting it looks, the very image of coolness and refreshment."

"O mother, please don't stop; the carriages before us will get out of sight, and we don't know the road."

"There is no fear of our mistaking it, my child."

Mr. Russell, who had jumped out of his wagon, now came toward them with a tin cup filled with clear, cool, sparkling water.

"There comes the sun," exclaimed Charles; "we are going to have a lovely day after all."

"There is the grand old beacon pine like a standard bearer on that high hill. How stately its trunk, how majestic its branches; how they must have wrestled with the winds of heaven on that lonely hill top, and come off victorious from the conflict. How they have whispered and sighed through long autumn days with no ear to listen to their mournful music.

There Charles," continued his mother, as the turn of the road hid the superb pine-tree on which her eyes had been fixed; "there are our party, from whom our cup of water has not detained us very long."

"What are you waiting for, Uncle Oswald," said Charles.

"We are trying to call to Mr. Herbert, who has taken the wrong road." The front carriage had gone too far to hear the voices of recall, and was traveling over the road that led between the lakes, leaving them behind.

"We must appeal to sight, not to sound," said Ellen's father; "if they cast any backward glances they will see us."

Parasols and handkerchiefs were waved, and at length attracted their attention. They paused, turned round, and their way was retraced.

"The lake! the lake!" exclaimed the children, as the pretty sheet of water appeared in view.

"You are too late for the boats," said

the farmer as they drove up to his house on the border of the lake. "I wish you had written me word you were coming, and I would have had them all ready for you."

The horses were taken out and put in the farmer's stable, and then all walked down to the shore to look at the boats. Most clumsy-looking affairs they were, one looking very like a tub, and both leaking a little. The best boat was seen in the distance across the lake with some men in it fishing.

The farmer brought a tin dipper and bailed out the boat. One of the large baskets was placed in it, and carefully the ladies were handed in. They were afraid to step to the one side or the other for fear of upsetting the boat. Mrs. Herbert and Ellen's Aunt Ada in the stern, Mrs. Howard and her sister, Miss Beekman, on the next seat, Dr. Elton and Charles on the end seat, and Mr. Russell rowing.

Quietly the boat moved through the

water past the beautiful lilies, their snowy, many-petaled cups and broad green leaves gently floating on the yielding surface. Outstretched hands failed to grasp them, and the lily was left

——"To live and thrive,
Whose root is fixed on the stable earth,
Whose head floats on the tossing wave."

"You had better put down your umbrella, Anne," said Miss Beekman to her sister; "there is too much wind to have it up;" and the umbrella was closed and laid across their laps, and a parasol unfolded in its place. A few moments after a puff of wind tossed the umbrella in the lake. A moment it remained on the water, but any effectual effort to reach it might have destroyed the equilibrium of the boat, and so, though willing hands touched it, it sank into the waters, which are thirty feet in depth.

"I am sorry," said Mrs. Herbert; "it was such a pretty silk umbrella."

"Yes," said Mrs. Howard; "it has been a constant and faithful friend in storm and sunshine, in country and town. It has sheltered me from many a pitiless rain, and its grateful shadow has enabled me to walk without discomfort beneath the sun of July."

The grove on the other side of the lake looked most inviting as they drew near its shore. The boat gave a sudden lurch as Charles was about to spring on the bank, and he so far lost his balance that he would have fallen into the water had not Dr. Elton caught his arm and drawn him in.

Dr. Elton took the oars to row back for the rest of the party, while Mr. Oswald and Mr. Herbert arrived in the little tub-like boat, which they had paddled over with two pieces of board.

"Charley," said Mr. Oswald, "you had better go back in this boat for a pail of milk and a pail of water."

Charles sprang in, pleased with the trust

reposed in him, and paddled out about twenty feet from the land. He found, however, that the clumsy little boat would not obey the paddles, and instead of moving on as he wished, it went spinning round and round. He wisely did not venture over the deep water in a conveyance that reminded him of the bowl in which the three wise men of Gotham made their famous expedition, as he did not wish to emulate their fame; and paddling the boat back, he jumped upon the shore. But before he could seize the chain the boat was floating off. He sprang into the water up to his knees, secured the chain, and fastened it to a root.

He looked rather disconsolate as his mother approached. He was drenched to his knees; his straw hat was damp and bent, and continually blowing off his head; the ribbon that attached it to his button-hole had snapped, and he was rather mortified at his unsuccessful effort at

managing the boat. Rather an unpromising opening for the day's pleasure to which he had looked forward with such eager anticipation. Ellen walked beside him with a great deal of sympathy in her little face. They found the rest of the party already busy with their preparations for their dinner in the woods, those pleasant preparations which give so much zest to the repast.

Aunt Carrie and Mr. Russell were very busy making the fire. They had collected dry sticks and kindled them in the hollow of an old stump, well adapted for a fireplace, and blackened and charred on former and similar occasions. There was soon a clear and glowing flame, and Mrs. Howard called Charles to dry his clothes by the genial heat. But he was seated in the boat, the oars in his hand, and the damp clothes were not of much consequence now, they would soon dry in the sun and wind. This boat he could manage nicely, and he came in after a vigor-

ous row, his face glowing with the exercise.

"May Ellen go with me now?" said he.

Ellen's father placed her in the boat, and Charles rowed her up and down the lake, while George and Willie looked on with admiring eyes.

"Might they go too with Charles?" they inquired.

Their father consented, and when Ellen came ashore the two little boys, their faces bright with smiles, took their places in the boat, with many injunctions to sit very still. How much they enjoyed that row, which was prolonged until dinner!

The ladies, meanwhile, had been very busy. The cloth was laid upon the grass; the cucumbers were peeled and sliced by the fair hands of Miss Annie Stevenson, and duly seasoned with pepper, salt, and vinegar. Mrs. Herbert brought out of her neatly packed basket her light biscuit, her dainty jelly cake, and her nice olives.

"It is easy to see what admirable house-

keepers these ladies are," said Mr. Robert Oswald, who had been quietly watching the preparations.

"One has only to visit the rectory to have strong confirmation of that," replied his brother; "they do honor to our city of brotherly love."

Aunt Ada, having prepared the chicken-salad, and the hot coffee, now invited the party to their fragrant meal. Mr. Oswald devoutly asked God's blessing on the repast, and they seated themselves on the grass around it. Cold fowl, and sandwiches, and hard-boiled eggs, everything was pronounced very good, and eaten with hearty appetite.

Before the dessert came the interlude of washing the plates, spoons, and forks in the clear waters of the lake. Lemons were then squeezed, and some very nice lemonade prepared, and pies and puddings, olives and cake were eaten, and thus ended the repast.

"Papa, please tell us a story," said the

children as they seated themselves on the grass near their father.

"What shall I tell you about? that great alligator's nest, with broken shells in it, that Dr. Livingstone and his party made their fire in? Willie, do you think it was a nicer place than our stump there for a traveler's fire? Or about that naughty boy that stole lemons and ate them, and that he might not be discovered went down to the river to wash his mouth."

"Well, papa, what then?" said Willie.

"Well, an alligator seized him and carried him to an island in the middle of the stream, and there the boy caught hold of the reeds and baffled the alligator, who could not dislodge him. And the boy's cries called his companions, who came in a canoe and drove the alligator away and carried the boy home."

"Poor boy! was he hurt?" asked George.

"Yes, he bore the marks of the teeth

and claws of the alligator on his legs and arms for many a day."

"I think it was a good lesson to him," said Ellen, "not to steal and then try and conceal his theft."

"Is that all, papa? Why, that is a very short story," said Willie. "Won't you tell us another?"

"I will if you will answer me two questions out of the Bible."

"Well, papa, let us hear them."

"What was once seen hanging on an oak?"

"An acorn," said Willie, looking up at the oaks above him.

"Ah no, that is not what I mean; an acorn is seen constantly on an oak. But I mean some remarkable object."

"Jacob's wives buried their strange gods and their earrings under an oak in Shechem," said Ellen.

"Yes, but they did not hang them on the branches."

"Ah, I know," said George; "it was

Absalom that was caught by his hair as he rode under the thick branches of a great oak, and his mule ran away. I have the picture of it."

"Yes, Georgy, that is right. It was in the wood of Ephraim that this wicked son fought against his father, and twenty thousand men were slain that day; and what became of Absalom?"

"Joab pierced him through with three darts, and that was the end of that beautiful young man, hanging by his long fair hair between heaven and earth."

"Now for the other question, papa?"

"What sorrowful tree is spoken of in the Bible?"

"The weeping willow by the waters of Babylon, on which the Jews hung their harps," said Ellen.

"No, my daughter."

"The fig-tree that our Lord cursed," said Charles.

"No, sir, not that."

"O papa, this is a difficult question. I

never heard of any sorrowful tree in the Bible. Won't you tell us?"

"Well, my dear, you will find it mentioned in the eighth verse of the thirty-fifth chapter of Genesis, and it is called Allon-bachuth, or the oak of weeping, and it was so named because Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, was buried under it."

"Now for the story," said George.

"Not so fast, my boys. I said when you had answered two questions from the Bible. I think you have only answered one."

"Ask us another then, papa, and we may do better."

"Can you tell me who was sitting under an oak when he was tempted to disobey God?"

"O it was that prophet that was sent to prophesy against Jeroboam's altar," said Ellen, "and the Lord told him not to eat any bread or drink water in that place, and he had refused to take

the refreshment the king had offered him."

"How then did he disobey God?"

"Because," said Charles, "he was deceived by an old prophet who lived there, and who told him that the Lord had sent him to bring him back to his house that he might eat bread and drink water."

"And what was the consequence of his disobedience?"

"A lion met him by the way and slew him."

"My children, you have answered very well; now I will tell you my story which was suggested by the sight of that gnarled old oak above us. My story is about an oak, the oak of Luxford's Lane, and it is told by Mr. Neal in his Legends. What I am going to tell you took place a hundred and fifty-six years ago, on the 26th of November, 1703. Very many people had reason to remember that day, and for many years it was spoken of with a shudder. The weather was unnaturally warm,

the sun shone out with a faint light between dark clouds. The dumb animals seemed to feel that something fearful was coming. The oxen ran madly about the fields, tearing up the grass with their hoofs and horns. The horses reared and kicked, and obeyed neither bit nor rein. The fowls went to roost at mid-day, and the dogs bayed mournfully. At four in the afternoon a pink cloud, edged with purple, like a doubled fist, was seen in the southwest. Men looked at it from the doors of their houses and called it 'The bloody cloud.'

"In a little valley at the foot of the Luxford rocks there was an old gray stone cottage with a heavy slate roof and latticed windows, shaded by a grape-vine. Pleasant without and within it looked that afternoon, with its nicely swept floor, its bright fire, and the cheerful face of its mistress as she welcomed her husband home after his day's work.

"'I never saw such a strange afternoon,'

said John Lawrence; one minute as still as July, and the next the wind comes roaring as if it would blow down the church tower.'

"'There it is again,' said his wife; hearken?'

"'We shall have rain,' said he, looking out of the door; 'I'll shut it up and we'll be comfortable. What is the matter with the cat?'

"She tore round the room like a wild creature, leaping up against the walls, and darting at the windows. It was growing dark, but the bloody cloud grew brighter and glared down fearfully. The wind moaned and roared, and all over the land men's hearts were failing them for fear. A mighty rushing wind careering in its strength, tearing up grand old trees, unroofing cottages, laying low lofty spires, carrying ruin and desolation in hall and hamlet. It piled up the waves of the ocean, dashing them against cliff and beach, and carrying dismay to the heart

of fisherman and sailor. Was there ever such a fearful night?

"John Lawrence was sitting by his fireside when he heard a knock at the door.

"'Who can this be?' he exclaimed as he opened the door. 'Why, Brown, what is it?'

"'Your father is dying and wishes to see you. Nothing else would have brought me out such a night as this. How we are to get back I don't know.'

"'I will go,' said John, 'but I must come back, for I cannot leave my master's property such a night as this. What are you doing, Mary?'

"'Getting ready to go with you. Your father has always been a father to me.'

"'You can't go such a night.'

"'The wind will take you off your feet,' said Brown.

"'Let me try,' said she quietly, and after some discussion the party set out. All their strength was needed for that walk.

> 'O night, and storms, and darkness,
> Ye are wondrous strong;'

but they pressed onward, now finding some sheltered path, now throwing themselves on the ground till the fury of the wind was somewhat spent; and now struggling onward when it lulled, they reached the house and stood by the bedside of the dying man. He knew them and smiled, though he could no longer speak, and there they sat quietly, John reading holy words to soothe and comfort the dying man. Four hours they watched beside the bed of death, and at the mystic hour of midnight the spirit left its earthly tabernacle. Through all that war of the elements it passed, such was the calm trust of those mourners, to eternal peace.

"In half an hour John set out, in spite of all remonstrance, to look after things at home, leaving his wife until the next morning.

"That mighty wind was dashing hundreds of vessels against the cliffs of Old

England, and fifty thousand seamen were buried beneath the ocean waves. An English fleet was destroyed, the Eddystone light-house and its architect were in the depths of the sea.

"John Lawrence was creeping along, strong in his honest purpose, till he reached Luxford's Lane, where between high walls of rocks he almost found a hiding-place from the wind. As it shifted to the south, however, such a long, furious blast drove up the narrow lane that he was compelled to seek shelter in the cranny of a rock. That wild blast tore up a great oak just above him, and hurled it into the road, making it impossible for him to move. For two long, awful hours he stood in silence and darkness, listening to the roar of the elements and wondering when this would come to an end. At length, as the rain came down in a steady pour, the wind moderated, and as the first faint streaks of daylight appeared it was only a high gale.

"When morning came John Lawrence got out of his hiding-place, climbing over the great branches of the fallen oak, and went down to his cottage, which he found in ruins. 'Mark that fifth commandment,' he used to say to his children in after life: 'Honor thy father and mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.' If your mother and I had not gone out in that great storm to see our father we should have been buried in the ruins of our cottage; and I should have died there alone but for the oak of Luxford's Lane.'"

"What a beautiful story, papa, and how kind in you to tell it to us," said Ellen, "instead of talking to the other people."

"And now, children, do you want a row on the lake?"

"Indeed we do!" they exclaimed joyfully.

They were soon in the boat with Miss Beekman and Miss Fanny Stevenson. Mr.

Oswald rowed them into the other lake to gather lilies.

The rest of the party were seated on the grass, the oak-trees spread their ample shade, and a fresh breeze stirred the waters of the lake. It was one of those delicious hours when all around ministers to joy. It was easy to "look through nature up to nature's God," and talk of his wondrous love to the children of men. With minds and hearts tuned to harmony, it was pleasant to look far beyond earth, with its hills, and woods, and waters, to that land of whose satisfying beauty the fairest scenes of earth are but dim and fading types. Religion, while it sanctifies our social enjoyments with its heavenly presence, gives them a deeper meaning and a keener zest.

> "Gay mirth shall deepen into joy,
> Earth's hopes grow half divine,
> When Jesus visits us, to make
> Life's water glow as wine."

Religious thoughts found meet expression in the voice of song, and sweet familiar

hymns, ever new to the heart, rose in the oak grove: "Jesus lover of my soul," "I would not live alway," "Inspirer and Hearer of prayer," and "Come, let us join our friends above." The voices were melodious and accorded finely, and the gently flowing waters seemed to move in sweet accord to the music.

Soon the returning boat was seen in the outlet of the lake, and as it approached was welcomed with the refrain of "Home again, home again." Ellen landed with her hands filled with pond-lilies; all the floral treasures had been consigned to her keeping. Hours might thus have passed unheeded away, but prudence whispered that there was a very dark, heavy, threatening cloud gradually rising from the west, and uttering its angry thunders in the distance, and that it would be well to reach the other side of the lake, where they might seek shelter before the storm.

"It is too pleasant to leave here now,"

said Mr. Herbert; "we were just in the height of our enjoyment."

"I find in this book, 'Willmott's Summer Time in the Country,'" said Mr. Howard, "a little record of our visit here two years ago, opposite a sentiment which then impressed us with its beauty. Will you read it aloud?"

Mr. Herbert read: "There is an Indian superstition illustrating very sweetly the wide-spreading fruitfulness of blessing and contentment. A plant grows in the jungle which emits a clear flame in the night. 'To wanderers in the Himalaya Mountains it serves for a lamp burning without oil.' In a spiritual sense the luminous grass sheds green over our villages, and skirts the flinty highways of swarming cities, if only it be sought after with loving and trustful eyes. Everywhere the seed of hope and joy has been scattered by the great Husbandman. Its blade shines in the darkest weather. Alas that men should trample it under

foot! despising the luster and guidance of little mercies in their impatient pride to reach a broader and more magnificent thoroughfare."

"That is very true and beautiful," said Mr. Herbert; "and for our motto of to-day I suggest the passage on the margin of which I have written this day's name and date."

"When the packet ship Lady Hobart was driving before the hurricane, a white bird suddenly descended on the mast. The hearts of the crew were lightened; hope dawned. Such consolation may be always mine. One bright, holy, faithful thought is my dove upon the mast. However sadly tossing over the waves of this troublesome world, that vanishing bird of paradise nerves and strengthens. It tells me that the storm will soon be over and gone, and the green land with the time of the singing of birds be come."

"Well, the storm will soon be upon us," said Ellen's Uncle Oswald, "if we

stay for any more beautiful thoughts. We ought to be off at once." The children, Mrs. Herbert and her sister Annie, and Miss Beekman, went in the first boat, which Mr. Oswald rowed, and which he was to bring back for the rest of the party. The approaching storm darkened and ruffled the waters, and a strong wind made the rowing very hard work. Wind and tide were contrary.

"Put down your umbrellas, ladies; we are going to have a squall," said Mr. Oswald.

The word was ominous. The ladies looked apprehensively at the gathering cloud and dark waters. Was there really any danger? The boat was clumsy, the waters deep, and the storm might soon be upon them. And those children! There they were, all unconscious of danger, with entire faith in their father, who would surely bring them all safe to land. Little Willie, with his sweet face and

clear blue eye, sat up so straight by his brother in the stern. How much the ladies wished that he were between them. How little progress they made. The wind was strong, and the boat heavily laden.

There were few words said. Eager eyes looked toward the landing place; but the current had borne the boat far to the north, and Mr. Oswald was relieved to land his passengers anywhere before the storm came upon them. And so they landed in a clover-field, and failing to discern a gate which opened into a lane that led to the farmer's house, they climbed over two fences, and reached the friendly shelter of the shed.

They now watched for the coming of the little tublike boat, while Mr. Oswald recrossed for the rest of the party. Dr. Elton and Mr. Russell were in the little boat, with Mrs. Howard and Charles for passengers. It was evidently managed with difficulty. Those miserable board-

paddles were not fitted for the emergency, and it moved but slowly.

"I am very much troubled about that boat," said Mrs. Herbert; "I think it is not safe, and here comes the rain."

It fell in great drops, with a ringing sound; and as Mrs. Howard sat comfortably wrapped up in her water-proof cloak, she recalled with pleasure Willie's description of "fishing on a lake in a smart shower. It is like the playing of musical glasses. The drops ring out with a clear bell-like tinkle, following each other sometimes so closely that it resembles the winding of a distant horn, and then in the momentary intervals the bursting of the thousand tiny bubbles comes stealthily on your ear, more like the recollection of a sound than a distant murmur."

I am glad, thought Mrs. Howard, that I have heard this piece of unwritten music.

Her thought was rebuked by Dr. Elton's words, as he said to Mr. Russell, who was brandishing his uncouth paddle,

"This is too hard work to be pleasant;" and Mrs. Howard turned from her unwritten music to think of the toilsome rowing or paddling, and of the clumsy craft, so difficult to guide and impel. The careful thought came rather late, for the shore was soon reached, and Mrs. Herbert kindly ran out with an umbrella, which she gave to Charles, while she ran back in the rain.

The force of the sudden storm was soon spent, and the party who last crossed did not suffer, as they were protected by umbrellas from the fringes of the departing clouds.

The farmer invited them to come in and dry their clothes by the fire, and the three or four who had been sprinkled by that passing cloud accepted the invitation. When they came out the skies were bright and blue, while fleecy white clouds were sailing over the calm serene.

The drive home was charming, the dust all laid by the shower, and a pecul-

iar transparency and elasticity in the air. Again they paused at the old well by the wayside, and Mrs. Howard proposed that they should visit the slate quarries, of which they had had a glimpse in passing. The proposal met with a ready response. Three gentlemen remained with the horses, and the rest of the party walked to the quarries. It was a wild and deep excavation, wrought long ago, and left so long in quiet and peace that nature had come lovingly to weave her garlands and hang her drapery over the stately walls. A ledge formed of the debris made the pathway; towering walls rose on either side, and wide-spreading butternut-trees filled with fruit closed in the ravine.

"O Ellen!" cried Charles, "look what beautiful raspberries, and blackberries, and blackcaps. No little children have found their way here to pick them."

They were very sweet and fine, and all were tempted to gather them. There

was some discussion about a square mass in the center of the ravine that was piled up with the regularity of mason-work, and they concluded that it must have fallen in a mass from the perpendicular cliff. The children found their way down the ledge into the chasm below, and Charles was returning with a handful of fine red raspberries for his mother, when the slates to which he clung gave way, and he crushed his berries in saving himself from falling. Great smooth slabs of slate seemed but to invite the touch of a finger to detach them from the mass above. Far-spreading mounds of refuse slate on the outside of the excavation, told of extensive works in the bygone time, when the hum of labor resounded through this now deserted spot.

"My former home," said Mrs. Howard, "was near very extensive quarries of brown stone, and it was interesting to visit them; to see the hundreds of men em-

ployed in blasting the solid rock, and the vast excavations in deep shadow while we stood in the sunshine. You could scarcely believe that the quiet turf had, of old time, overspread all that scene of busy activity; and that when the dead, whose resting-place was marked by the leaning tombstones, with their moss-grown inscriptions, were laid in their long homes, it was on the grassy peaceful bank sloping to the river; vast chasms, with walls several hundred feet high, yawn beneath your feet, and man has carved and hewn his way into the solid rock."

"A friend of mine," said Mr. Russell, "who had entered the ministry, told me that when he was oppressed with the responsibilities of his work, he crossed the river and visited the quarries, and as he looked on the great results brought about by patient, persistent effort, new hope and courage sprung up within him."

"Do you remember," said Dr. Elton, "the dream of a good minister in the be-

ginning of his ministerial career, when his heart was discouraged within him? He thought he was told to break a rock to pieces, and a hammer was put into his hand to begin his work. The rock was great, and his hammer was small; what impression could he make on that solid mass? But he began his work, and after a number of vigorous strokes the rock was cleft asunder."

"'Is not my word as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?' That text must have been very encouraging to him after that dream," said Mr. Russell.

"I have heard," said Cousin Gertrude, "Mrs. Howard often speak of those quarries, and she told me a very interesting story about them. A company of Welsh emigrants were induced to come up and work these quarries. There was one pious woman among this company, who invited the women to come to her house every week to a prayer-meeting. A similar meeting was soon established for

the men. Cousin Gertrude's father was invited to come and baptize a child, and he then, at their request, made an appointment to preach to them once a fortnight. There were soon earnest prayers for mercy, and grateful hymns of praise heard in these quarries; 'new hopes' were radiant on those 'furrowed brows,' and the life of care was brightened by the new life of faith. The truth was embraced with the characteristic ardor of their nation; their hearts were glowing with a heavenly flame, and their faces shone with an unwonted light. One face, remarkable for its calm serenity and patient goodness, fixed the attention of Aunt Ellers, Cousin Gertrude's mother. She never wearied of looking at it, so suggestive was it of all good things. It chanced that Uncle Ellers needed a farmer, and my aunt said at once, 'Do go and engage that good woman's husband.' It did not seem the most sensible thing to engage a farmer because his wife was of a sweet counte-

nance, but it proved a good comfort to all parties. Till the day of his death this farmer continued on my uncle's farm, faithful to all his interests, of which he was mindful even on his dying bed. His daughter, a slender, graceful girl, with a light, quick step, a soft, low voice, and a pale, pleasing countenance, became Cousin Gertrude's helper in all her activities.

"How well I remember the grace with which she ornamented the breakfast-table; the wreath of morning-glories, deep purple and white, twined around the basket of fruit. And then the tea-table on the piazza, with its white cloth and its profusion of gay and fragrant flowers, arranged with such exquisite taste. And after her light household tasks were performed, her skillful fingers moulded wax flowers, and made boxes and baskets of pasteboard and gilt paper, and worked in Berlin wool, for the missionary bazar. It was she who kept the library in order, and acted as librarian in the Sunday-

school in the house, and as teacher to the young children."

"What became of her?" asked Miss Stevenson.

"She married a young man of piety and promise. But his health soon failed, and she accompanied him to the South. On his homeward voyage she soothed his last moments, and directed the dying eye of faith to his Father's house and his home in heaven. He was destined to see no other; for from that tossing ship his spirit departed, and the young wife with her little girl was left alone. She went home to her mother in the western part of the state with a constitution much broken by care and sorrow."

"And where is she now?"

"She died last year. She had been for some years the happy wife of a Baptist clergyman, but her gentle ministries on earth are now ended."

But these quarries were linked in other ways to Aunt Ellers's household. The

child whose baptism opened the door for the preaching of the Gospel in this place, went there to live when she was nine years old, and remained in that peaceful abode till her death nearly fifty years after; and Sarah, who came there at the same age and about the same time, is, as you all know, still with Cousin Gertrude. Her mother's house was the center of those benignant religious influences that so transformed that community.

"But I fear I have tired you all with my long story, and the gentlemen will wonder what is become of us."

"We will tell them," said Miss Stevenson, "that we have found 'sermons in stones,' to which we have paused to listen. This is our way through this opening in the rock; how completely it is hidden by the bushes."

"Out of the shadow into the sun," exclaimed Dr. Elton as, emerging from the ravine, the sunny landscape greeted them.

"You must have found the quarries

deeply interesting," said Mr. Herbert on their return; "what kept you so long?"

"Ah, we have been picking berries and moralizing, and listening to stories from the old stones," said Miss Stevenson.

The scenery looked finer than in the morning; each turn of the winding road revealed some reach of meadow, or grain-field rich with waving gold, some swelling, rounded hill, or some wide sweep of pasture and woodland. At one time the horizon was encircled with a chain of round wooded hills, through the openings of which towered the Catskills. How they had been vailed in mist during the morning, but now in their deep blue robes they stood in their stately grandeur. The day was one of varied and continual changes. Bright, soft, fleecy clouds, with wonderful beauty of outline, rested in the north; while to the east a lofty mass of towering cloud, now assuming the form of an obelisk and now of a sphinx, frequently attracted admiring backward

glances. How rapidly the great Artist paints his pictures in the heavens! What vivid tints, and glowing hues, and graceful forms are laid on that broad canvas, and fade never again to greet mortal vision. Each sunset comes with its own peculiar beauty, unlike what has been before, unlike what will be again, opening new vistas, as if to reveal glimpses of glory, lifting aside the curtain that conceals the far depths of heavenly radiance.

> Ah! that such beauty, varying in the light
> Of living nature, cannot be portrayed
> By words, or by the pencil's silent skill;
> But is the property of him alone
> Who hath beheld it, noted it with care,
> And in his mind recorded it with love."

The children had been amused in watching the sun, who seemed with one eye to look down upon them from a rift in the dark cloud. Now he filled the mountain gorges with a rich crimson glory, passing from heaven to earth, as his level beams illuminated a shower falling in the distance.

"What a day this has been!" said Ellen. "So much to enjoy and admire, and only one little dash of rain to mar our pleasure!"

"That was nothing," said Charles; "a little wetting does no harm. My clothes and shoes have been wet through several times to-day; but had we not a delightful row on the lake?"

"Not like the one we had last year," replied Ellen. "Then the water was so smooth that you could see the sky reflected in it; to-day it looked so dark and deep! Then, too, do you remember what sweet hymns we sung as we floated over the lake? None of us wanted to land."

"You wanted

> 'To float ever, ever
> Upon the silver waves of your sweet singing,
> Without a cloud, without a star,
> But by the instinct of sweet music driven.'"

"We could not have floated very far on that lake, mother; we would soon

have been entangled among the pond lilies," said Charles.

"And then," said Ellen, "our Cousin Bessie was with us last year, and that added very much to my pleasure. To-day I was the only little girl."

"What a grand time Bessie is having in the White Mountains!" said Charles. "Just think of spending six weeks there, riding on horseback over those grand mountains, looking up every day at Mount Washington, with the white patches on his face, and traveling through those solemn old gorges! How I should like to be there!"

"I should like," said Ellen, "to see the Old Man of the Mountain, looking so calmly down upon the lake, and upon the people that come and go, while he still gazes on, year after year, so quiet and unmovable."

"You would not expect a rock to be very noisy or active, Ellie; so I hope to find him there when I go, as perhaps I

may one of these days. Have you the picture of that dark stony face that Bessie sent you?"

"O yes! and of Mount Washington too; and Bessie drew a sketch of it in her drawing-book. We ought to have brought our pencils, and sketched the lake."

"We could not have made much of a picture," replied Charles; "besides, I wanted all my time for rowing, for it is the only opportunity I have in the year to row, and I look forward to it all the summer."

"And now it is over, and you have only to look back upon it," said Ellen.

"That is not quite as pleasant as to look forward," replied Charles.

"That is one advantage the Christian has," said his aunt; "his great happiness is always before him; he can always enjoy the pleasure of looking forward, and this great hope lightens up his life. Now those who are seeking their rest in

this world are continually parting with portions of their inheritance, till soon it will be all gone. They are going away from their possessions, while the Christian is hastening to his."

"I think," said Ellen, "this day's pleasure has been almost too short; it has passed away so rapidly."

"Well, my dear," replied her aunt, "you know what lesson the rapid flight of our earthly pleasures teaches us. While the ceaseless chime sounds in our ears, 'Passing away,' we can also hear it say, 'Look above,' where the pastures are always green and the leaf never fades, and where our day's pleasure will never come to an end."

"There is the place," said Miss Beekman, "where the carriage was overturned when we returned from the picnic last year."

"Who were in it?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Darcy, Miss Fanny and Miss Annie Stevenson, and our two young

gentlemen, Edward and his young English friend."

"Did you see them at the time?"

"Yes, indeed; we were just before them, and the sound of their merry voices and occasionally snatches of sweet song were wafted to me as we rode on, when I turned, I know not why, and saw them thrown in the air, and then falling to the ground. It was the work of a moment, and we were by their side, expecting dislocated limbs, or even more fearful consequences. Edward, kneeling on one knee, was supporting a lady who had fainted; and they were all gathering themselves up in a confused way, and looking anxiously to see whether any one was hurt."

"And no one was seriously hurt?"

"No; it was wonderful, such an overturn, and only a few bruises! We were all most thankful when we found that all were safe, only agitated and bruised."

"What caused the accident?"

"It was not careless driving; the horses were gentle; but the bolt of the wagon came out. It was amusing to see Mrs. Darcy's encounter with a woman who came out of a house near, as we thought, to help us in our rueful condition. Instead of that, she began, with her sharp, shrill voice, to scold us. 'She was not accustomed to such scenes. Folks would be racing and carrying on, and then they would meet with accidents.' 'But, my good woman,' said Mrs. Darcy, in her quaint way, 'don't you see you are all wrong? We were not racing; we were driving very quietly, when the bolt of the wagon came out, and we were overturned. You ought not to be so harsh in your judgments.' But here we are at the village."

Good-by was said to the friends who met them there, and they drove rapidly home. They were seated at the tea-table talking over the day's pleasure, when a cloud that had for some time been rising

darkly from the west, overspread the heavens, and down came a beautiful abundant shower, through which gleamed the rays of the setting sun.

"Mr. Herbert said it was all right to-day, and so it has proved," said Miss Beekman; "we did not leave a minute too soon, sorry as we were to leave the lake-shore; and here we are enjoying our evening meal, safely sheltered from the shower."

"Aunt Anna," said Ellen at the close of the evening, as she sat looking over the book that she had taken out of the basket, "I have found a motto that suits us children for the picnic better than the one Mr. Herbert has marked. You know what we have seen has led us to sing sweet hymns, and to pleasant thoughts about heaven as our home?"

"Well, read and mark it, dear, for the motto of your picnic."

"The foot of the Christian's ladder may rest on a tuft of grass or a few flowers, but the top reaches to heaven."

V.

A LETTER TO CHARLIE.

EDGEWOOD, *January*, 185–.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—I have a little friend who would have made his cheeks look red, and his head feel clear, if he had been here this morning to go with me into the grove and help me give directions to the woodman. It was just the morning for "one grand tumble" in the snow, and with rubber boots, and a good sled, I think we might have given the most pleasant variety to our exercises. As it was, I had to content myself with such running and jumping as my loneliness would allow me to indulge in.

Have you ever stood by to see an old oak, whose age is to be reckoned by centuries, cut down in a grove? It is one of the grandest sights in common life, and it takes only a little grain of sentiment to

make it also a very sad sight. To say nothing of the history of such a tree, which would of necessity introduce the poor "red men," with their council-fires and war-dances, and later would tell us touching stories of our own ancestry, and still later would remind us of the sports of our own childhood, and perhaps even recall the words which were spoken under its shade by young friends who were taken from us long ago; to say nothing of all this, there is a great deal to interest the thoughtful at the foot of an old oak just about to be cut down; and when the work is done, when the last blow has fallen, O it is grand to see the thing—it seems almost as if it had a soul—steady itself for an instant, as if deciding which way to fall. It is decided, and slowly it bends its head, slowly at first, then less slow, then faster! faster!! faster!!! Crash! crash!! crash!!! and the very earth rings one solemn peal out of respect to the fallen.

If I wished for you, my dear Charles,

this morning, I wished you were with me this evening too at twilight. I came up to my room, and sat down alone to meditate and pray. I thought of the pleasant little times we used to have three years ago this very month at Woodlands. I hope you have not forgotten them, when, sitting together before the open wood fire in my room, we talked to each other of Jesus and of heaven. You were very happy then because you were striving to be very good. Sometimes your wicked heart would master you, but then you would confess your sins to your Saviour, and he would take your darkness away.

I hope, my darling boy, that you are still striving to be a follower of Christ. You have many more temptations now than you had a few years ago, and as you grow older, they will continue to increase in number and in power. Do not, I pray you, forget that you must love Jesus, and keep giving him your heart anew every day if you do not wish these temptations

to overcome you. Remember that God's eye is always upon you. Ask your heart many times every day "Is God pleased with me? Does he smile upon me?"

Give my kindest remembrances to your little cousins.

Your affectionate friend,

ALFRED GREY.

VI.

COUSIN CHARLIE'S LETTER TO ERNEST.

WOODLANDS, *January*, 185–.

MY DEAR COUSIN,—Old General Boreas has regularly begun his siege. We have been expecting him for some time, but not in such force. He came down a few days ago, planted his battering train, and summoned us to surrender; but we stoutly refused, when he opened his fire with grape-shot upon us. We kept up an incessant fire in return, though his shot were flying through every port-hole.

Our cavalry could not be of any use, as the charges were in the hands of the enemy, but we kept up heart. General Boreas went off, with part of his infantry and most of his artillery, on a ravaging expedition, leaving us surrounded with a wall of circumvallation. Our main store of provisions is in the enemy's hands; the

roads are blocked up by his troops, and though our allies are making extensive efforts to send us reinforcements, they have not as yet succeeded in breaking through the enemy's works.

Yours affectionately,

CHARLES.

P. S. Our garrison have made several successful sorties, recaptured the horses, and driven the enemy back. General Boreas came up last night, but after sending in a few reconnoitering parties retreated, leaving the rest of his troops under General Zero to carry on the siege. We are commencing mining operations, and hope soon to drive the enemy back.

VII.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A THIMBLE.

BY LITTLE FANNY.

My earliest recollections are of being struck from the piece of ore of which I formed a part, (after being taken from the mine and beholding for the first time the light of day,) and going through various operations of beating, heating, and shaping, of which, as my memories of them are very faint, I shall say nothing. Then I was placed in a jewelry store in a glass case with many other things not of my own kind, but of precious stones and gold, and these looked upon me with disdain. I often wished myself in some comfortable work-box, where, shut out from the eyes of the world, I could gain from my companions some information, of which I must confess my stock was very small. One day, after I had been in the store a week,

a fashionably dressed lady came in and asked to see some thimbles. I was held up, being the nearest; but she laughed, and said she never used any but gold thimbles. This was mortifying, but it was worse than this to stay two months more and no one to ask for a silver thimble. At last a plainly dressed lady came with a little girl, and the lady said:

"Now, Kate, as you are eleven and need a thimble, you shall have one; but if you lose it I cannot afford another."

"O yes, mamma, I'll take care," she said.

I was taken, wrapped in soft pink paper, and Kate carried me slowly home. I was disappointed when they entered the house, for it was perfectly plain, and I knew they must be poor. The work-box in which I was placed was very shabby. All the instruments except the scissors were tarnished and rusty, and the faded green silk lining had evidently seen its best days. "Well, new comer," said the

bodkin in a cracked voice, "are you going to be proud, as our neighbor scissors is, because, forsooth, she has a smoother skin, flexible joints, and a deal of polish? She however, is young, and may be excused."

This incensed the scissors, and she said, drawing herself up, "I am of much more use than you are to man. What think you?" she said, abruptly turning to me.

"I am just from the mine and therefore know little about it," I replied; but wishing to win the favor of the scissors, I added hastily, "but I should think the scissors."

The bodkin darted a freezing glance at me, and her peculiar friend and ally, the the old crotchet needle, said scornfully, "Yes, you say the scissors because she is brighter. Know that Mrs. Bodkin has many more friends."

I was silent; this wrangling was very disagreeable to me. Just then our box was taken up stairs to Kate's room.

"Kate, Kate," called her mother, "come and try your thimble."

"Dear, dear," exclaimed our new mistress rather impatiently, "there's mother calling. I wish I could stay," and I saw a tempting book of tales, bound in Turkey morocco, with gilt edged leaves, lying on the table. She saw it too, and put it into the little book-case before she ran down stairs. I liked her very much, that is, her face, for I had not had time to judge of her character. Black eyes and hair, and a pleasant expression. Her mother was very like her, except that her forehead was deeply indented with lines of care and sorrow. "Now," she said, "there is a poor woman living near here. She has four children, the eldest only eight years old, and no clothes for them. I knew you would not grudge your time to help them."

"Certainly not, mamma," replied Kate; but she turned away her head, and I heard a little sigh as she threaded her needle.

"Is there anything you would rather do, dear?" asked her too indulgent mother. "Where would you have gone this afternoon?"

"I promised to go to Emma Farnham's, to picnic in the woods," was the reply; "but it is no matter."

"Yes, darling, do go; I can finish it alone," returned her mother; but she felt sad as she thought of the lonely afternoon, for her husband did not come in till late, and she dwelt with pleasure on the delightful hours with Kate sewing by her side. But Kate was gone, and as the weary mother stooped to pick me up (Kate had let me fall) I felt a scalding tear drop on my shining surface. Suddenly the bell rang and in bounded Kate, saying, "Mamma, I could not bear your staying all alone, so I told Emma I could not come. I wanted to surprise you."

I could see thankful tears now in her mother's eyes, and Kate felt repaid for the

sacrifice. I was not used after this, but lay in the same pink paper, in the same box I was in when Mrs. Leslie bought me. Another thimble, which I considered as far beneath me, (I was partly right, for steel, though much more useful, is estimated of less value than silver,) supplied my place, as Kate declared she would not lose her silver thimble. One day Kate took me, box and all, down stairs to her mother. "Mamma," she said, "may I give Cousin Fanny my thimble? To-morrow is her birthday, and I can give her nothing else."

I never felt so sorry as I did when I heard her say this, for I had become attached to this family, and did not wish to leave them for one I did not know. But Mrs. Leslie said quietly: "Yes, dear, if you wish it you can do so."

To-morrow came, and Kate, taking me in her hand, sallied forth with her mamma. They paused before a large handsome house. When they rang they were usher-

ed in by a servant in livery, and after passing through a marble hall, entered a parlor, where a Turkey carpet, crimson velvet sofas and chairs, ornaments and mirrors combined to show it to be the abode of wealth and luxury. Soon the servant again appeared and asked them to walk up stairs. At last they paused before a door and knocked. A faint "Come in," was the response, and they entered. The room was darkened, and only the faint gleam that shone through the crimson curtains served to show lying on the bed a young girl. She was dressed, and though an invalid a faint flush was visible upon her cheek. Yet she seemed weak and faint, and the hand which she held out to welcome Kate and her mother was almost transparent. "As I feel so much better, mamma has invited some visitors," she said smiling; "she will be so glad to see you."

Kate advanced and timidly held me out. "I would have got something hand-

somer, Cousin Fanny," she said, "but I could not."

"I value it quite as much," was the warm reply, "and thank you. It is the only useful present I have received. Jewelry I cannot wear."

I was then placed on a table, and Kate soon went away. Fanny was removed to another room, and I was alone for a great while. One day a servant came in, and after finding my box went out quickly. She walked along the street till she reached a store, a jewelry store, too, but O how different! It was old and dusty, and a surly looking man stood behind the counter. The girl handed me across and said tremulously, "What will you give me for this?"

"Quarter of a dollar," was the reply, and as she put me down and went hurriedly out, after receiving the money, I heard her mutter, "I'm a thief, but poor mother." The man shook his head, and reached from one of the musty shelves an old work-box

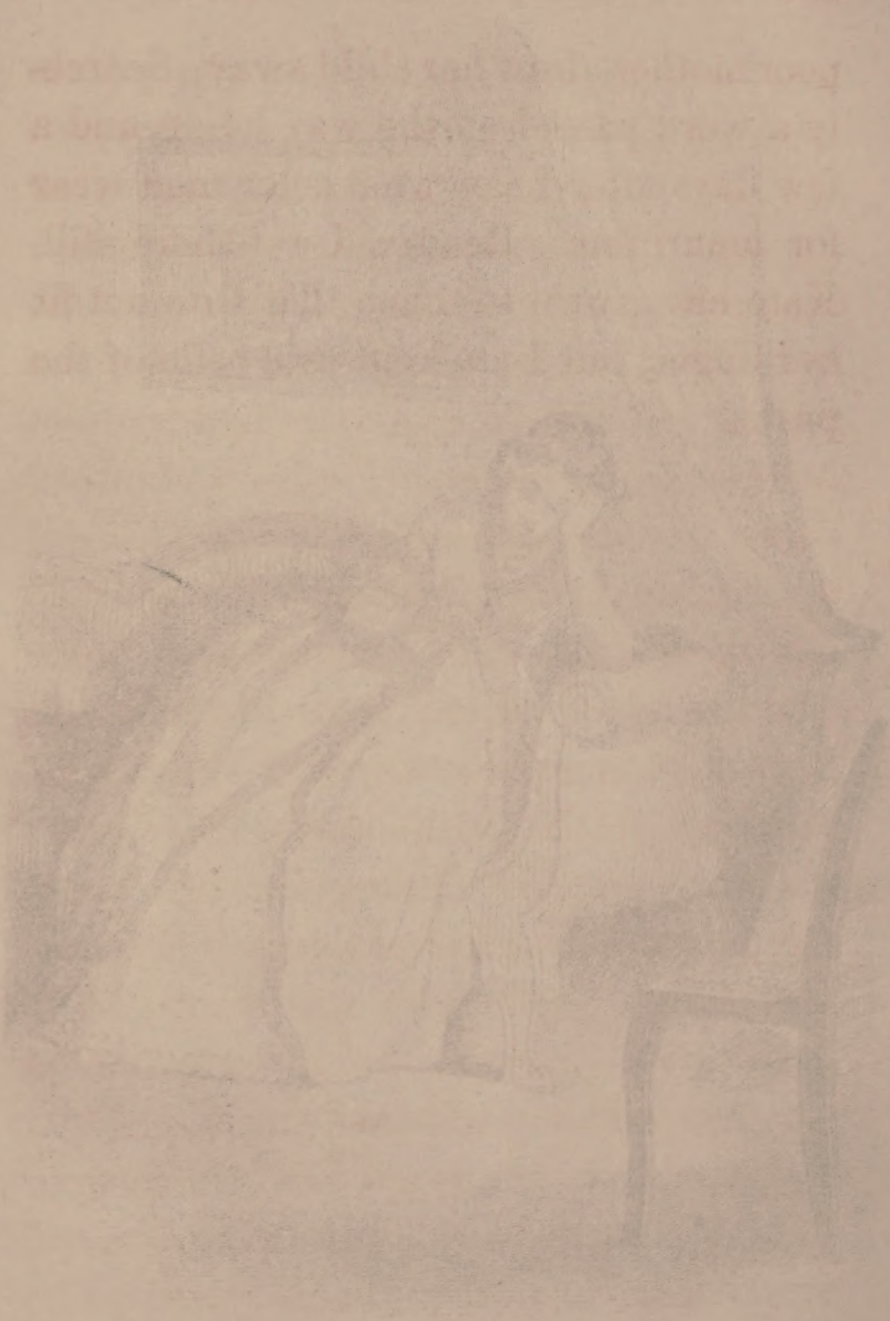
and put me in it. I was very angry: First, with the servant for taking me from a place where I had such pleasant companions; and secondly, with the shopman for putting me with tarnished instruments; I, whose luster was not dimmed by a year's confinement in Fanny's house. As it was a very obscure part of the city, I remained here for some time, and formed acquaintance with a lively needle who was a firm friend.

One day I heard voices talking outside, and one of them said, "Why, Kate, you surely do not want another work-box!" And a little girl and her mother entered, in whom I instantly recognized Mrs. Leslie and Kate. The latter was taller and thinner, but beyond that there was little alteration in either. How I wished to declare to them my identity! But I could not, and you can imagine my delight when I was chosen. "How like this is to the one you bought me last year, mamma," said Kate; "I should not wonder if it was the

same; you know that Fanny's maid was discovered in the theft of it, and she may have brought it here."

Kate was quite certain that it was so, and expressed great delight. "Suppose we go and see Fanny, Kate," said her mother, and with me in the box in her hand she went. There was no crape upon the bell, and Kate heaved a sigh of relief. The house was perfectly silent, and no one came to welcome them, so they walked up stairs and went into her room without knocking. Fanny was lying upon the bed in a state of insensibility. Fanny's mother came and whispered, "If you had not come you would never have seen my poor child again on earth. There would not have been time to send." Kate went to the bed and looked upon the face, almost as white as the pillow upon which it lay, and was gazing still when a smile lighted up her pale features and a change came over them; then a light sigh, and all was over. Kate's mother, after consoling the

poor mother, drew her child away. Scarcely a word passed on the way home, and a few days after I saw what color men wear for mourning. Reader, I am there still. Kate has grown so much that I do not fit her finger, but I am kept as a relic of the past.



No. 705

The Young Lady who would be a Queen.

VIII.

WHO WOULD BE A QUEEN?

"I," says the fashionable young lady, pouting over her soiled satin and broken necklace, and torn by the conflicting claims of vanity and debt, "I would be a queen. My wardrobe should contain the richest fabrics of the Indian loom; my casket should sparkle with the brightest gems of the Golcondian mine; the ocean should yield to me its largest and richest pearls. O, had I the power, I would gladly be a queen!"

"I," says the little girl, bounding in gladness through the walks and alleys of her diminutive garden, "I would be a queen. I would have the loveliest garden, and plant it with the tallest trees and most beautiful flowers, and water it with crystal fountains, and people it with birds of varied plumage and sweetest

song! O how I would love to be a queen!"

"I," says the little girl, weeping in sadness over the history of wrong and injustice, "I would be a queen, and I would punish the wicked and reward the just. I would make my people happy, and so win their love. O how I wish I were a queen!"

Listen, dear children, to the tale of real life which your dear grandmother has written for you, and to which she has appended the words at the head of this article. Permit me to present to my readers a sketch from the history of modern times.

A young princess, brought up under the care of a tender mother, an only, darling child, by the death of her father becomes heir to a kingdom; another disputes her right; an awful civil war commences; he who claims the crown spares no means to gain his purpose; his hands are stained with blood; his fellow-citizens

are slain by thousands in the field of battle. Years roll on, but still war rages furiously, clothed in accumulated horrors. Thus had her childhood been spent in tears, and in constant dread of her insatiate foe; her days have passed in bitterness. At length proposals for peace are made. But on one condition only the war shall cease—a victim is required, the lamb must be given to the vulture! O miserable fate of royalty! The gentle creature, at the early age of sixteen, must become the wife of her greatest mortal foe, a man at the mention of whose name she has always trembled, a tyrant, and the brother of her father! Who can imagine the sufferings inflicted on both child and parent at such a termination of this wretched warfare! May God in mercy look upon their severe calamity, and point them to a crown and a kingdom where peace and joy forever flow from the eternal Source of good, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest!

Let us, my dear young friends, set out in good earnest in pursuit of that kingdom and that crown which God has in reserve for those who with a holy ardor begin the heavenly race, determined, by divine assistance, to keep the prize in view until we obtain an entrance into the promised inheritance of glory everlasting.

IX.

FROM DEAR GRANDMAMMA.

My Dear Children,—You will perhaps be surprised when I tell you that a most destructive warfare is going on, particularly in our large cities. Light and darkness are contending; the safety and happiness of the soul of man is the grand object of light; its misery in time, and its endless destruction through eternity, is the object of the powers of darkness. To gloss over his views, this enemy of the human race sets all his machinery in motion: plays, music, dancing, fine attire, fashion, gay parties, fancy balls, foolish talking, loud laughing, anything to while away time and press the subject from thinking on the importance of the inestimable jewel consigned to his care, and blinded against the light which is shining around him. God in mercy, in the loudest voice, by

his messengers, is crying: "Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die? O come to the light which is so bright around you; leave the ranks of the destroyer; he smiles but to deceive, allures but to destroy."

Rest assured there is only one path that leads to safety here and hereafter. A quiet conscience, reconciled to God through Christ, what have you to fear? Choose. What a lovely flower is early piety! I hope, my dear children, you have already entered the list of the combated host, and are determined with all your powers to fight against sin in whatever form it may be presented before you, aided by the light of the Holy Spirit, by the counsel and example of pious parents, and by the day of grace and power in which you live. May you mature in every virtue, promote on all occasions in your power the good of your fellow-creatures, and secure to yourselves an entrance into the pure regions where the warfare allotted to humanity ends in the sweet rest of *eternity*.

X.

LINES WRITTEN BY OUR LITTLE COUSIN SYLVIA.

O I am sad, and yet I'm gay;
Can nothing while this mood away?
I hear the minstrels of the land,
And yet a careless listener stand.
Unmoved I hear the festive strain,
The lay of sorrow, love, or pain:
O I am sad, yet I am gay;
Can nothing while this mood away?

I playful pet my little bird,
And whisper him a gentle word,
And call him many a tender name,
As if he understood the same;
And blush and smile at all my folly,
And playful feel, and melancholy:
O then I'm sad, and yet I'm gay;
Can nothing while this mood away?

Heedless I rove by lake and fell,
And walk the deep ravine and dell,
And wreath wild flowers in my hair,
And hardly know that they are there.

I form fond dreams of dear delight,
To which the present is but night;
And then I'm sad, and then I'm gay,
And naught will while this mood away.

XI.

AUNT ELLEN'S STORY.

THE BABY-HOUSE.

A FOND and affectionate grandmother wishing to give to an only and beloved grandchild a practical example of good housewifery, with characteristic ingenuity and industry contrived and executed a baby-house, which should not only answer that valuable purpose, but should also convey a moral lesson, teaching her that the harmony and courtesy, the filial and fraternal affection which subsists among the members of a well-regulated family are far more productive of happiness than either the pleasures of the gay, or the toil and strife of the ambitious world; and truly if puppets ever taught the way to a happy and useful life it was these little ones, who presented

so fair a picture of a neat, orderly, industrious, domestic, and harmonious family. I am sure I cannot contribute more effectually to the entertainment of the younger readers of the "*Waif*" than by inserting in its columns a description of this baby-house.

Having chosen a large clothes-press as her theater of action, this ingenious and kind lady, with nothing to begin upon of a finished character except the heads and busts of her little people, constructed and furnished three apartments, kitchen, parlor, and bed-room. The kitchen was in the lower story, and was a perfect epitome of what a kitchen should be. Many a lady would have found it to her interest, ere she sat out in her domestic career, to come down in the humble guise of a learner to Mrs. Fitz Osborne's kitchen. Nothing that could contribute to the comfort and convenience of its inmates, or to the good order and neatness of the house, was wanting; the same spirit

which seemed to animate the heads of the house pervaded this humble department; all were busy, yet no jostling, bustling, angry interference; no scolding cook, or loitering housemaid. The good-natured smiling countenances around you had made you feel that to them duty was pleasure, and that its early and vigorous performance would bring leisure and contentment. The cook was shelling peas in one corner, the laundress was ironing on a newly-constructed table, which greatly facilitated her work; nurse had just come down in her neat cap, wrapper, and apron, (which rivaled the laundress's linen in whiteness,) with her bright porringer in her hand, to warm something for dear baby's breakfast previous to her setting about her work for the day; no dirty towels lay to disfigure this apartment; a corner-closet, open at the top, (of which the laundress kept the key,) received all such nuisances. Look where you would, your face was re-

flected from the polished utensils and well-rubbed furniture; a bright fire seemed to glow on the hearth, and even the neatness of the ash-hole without was guarded by a grate, lest the cinders should be mingled with ashes in the leach tub.

Ascending the stairs you reached the parlor, where two young ladies just growing into womanhood were sitting; the elder was hemming a pocket handkerchief for her father, the other was practicing on the guitar; a younger brother was drawing on a stand near his sister, that she might assist him with her advice; while a little girl sat on a bench winding a skein of silk for her sampler. The room, neatly carpeted, curtained, and furnished, looked as if the habits of the family were undisturbed by the rude or untidy movements of boisterous children. The neat drapery and snowy folds of the curtains lay in regular plaits. The chandelier with its wax candles was unsoiled by dust; the mantle-piece, with its array,

of tasteful but simple ornaments, undisfigured by litter, and the sofa bore no mark of the lazy lounge of the loitering schoolboy. The harp in the corner of the room had already been tuned, and was prepared to yield its sweet melody to the skillful touch. All was order and harmony. But leaving the young people to the employments of that morning hour, we ascend to that sanctuary of domestic love so emphatically called mamma's room. On an easy chair covered with dimity sat the mother of the family, (Mrs. Fitz Osborne.) She was dressed in a white cambric wrapper; on her lap lay the baby, and her foot rested upon a large cradle in which were two beautiful children (twins of two years old) sleeping. A little girl of ten was reading to her mother, while another still younger sat behind her mother's chair learning a lesson.

Mr. Fitz Osborne was sitting at his desk writing a letter to a friend; one

hand held the tiny pen, while the other was clasped round a bright looking little urchin of four years old, who, proud of his first coat and pantaloons, had climbed his father's knee and stood erect before the mirror, resting one hand on his father's shoulder. On the sheet of paper before him Mr. Fitz Osborne was supposed to have transcribed the following sentences in a small but legible hand:

"My dear friend: You gay men of the city have no idea of the domestic enjoyment we experience in the country. When I look around on my large but well-regulated family, and behold the wife of my bosom, to whom I am so deeply indebted, I cannot help exclaiming with the poet, Thou are indeed the 'last *best* gift to man.'"

After finishing the baby-house the lady took her pen and completed the present by the following little history:

OUR LITTLE HISTORY.

We are a little harmless group
In covert close as pigeon coop;
A simple tale I fain would write
For such as deem us worth their sight.
Of scraps, and shreds, and cotton white
Our limbs were formed by morning light;
Though stuffed, and squeezed, and pricked all o'er,
From us there oozed no drop of gore;
Man's head's the seat of noble thought,
But ours, alas! a vacuum—naught.
From Britain's isle thus far we came,
And painted toys our only name;
Without an arm, or hand, or foot
To hold a dress or wear a boot.
Now view us well, I pray, kind ladies,
Myself, my wife, boys, girls, and babies;
We sit with ease, with ease we stand;
Mark no discordance in our band!
Sixteen we number, and yet see
How very trim and neat we be;
Our thanks to little Jane are due;
Contrivance *this* to meet her view;
Now it was done to lead her mind
To joys domestic and refined.

Good housewifery is here displayed;
Of chambers each a sample laid;
For hints, however small, he said,
May yet befriend the gentle maid.
And when maturer years unfold
New duties, and new pleasures mould,
May life's best charm enchain her where
A peaceful home is her fondest care.

THE END.

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